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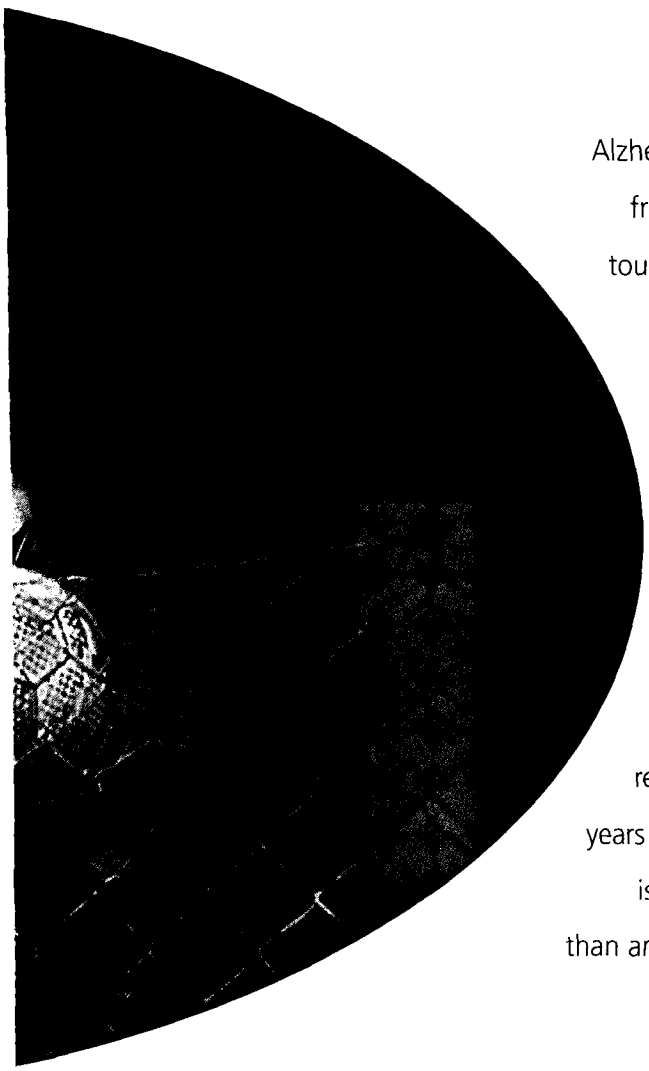

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Physician, heal thyself

TO THE EDITORS:

There is one glaring omission in Arnold S. Relman's otherwise excellent article "Why Johnny Can't Operate" (October 2): He does not address the question of who will become the physicians of the future. If medical training continues to deteriorate, the effect will be magnified by the eventual decline in quality of medical school applicants. My colleagues on medical school admissions committees publicly assure me that the quality of applicants has not declined; privately they admit it has. And of those top students entering the field, more and more are opting for research and biotech firms. The practice of general medicine is no longer considered desirable.

By the time the decline in quality of young doctors is apparent, there will, of necessity, be a huge lag time before any improvement could be seen. A doctor's training is a minimum of six to eight years, not counting college. Thus it would be at least a decade before a new crop of better students was out in the community, and that is assuming that the monumental changes suggested by Relman could be accomplished overnight.

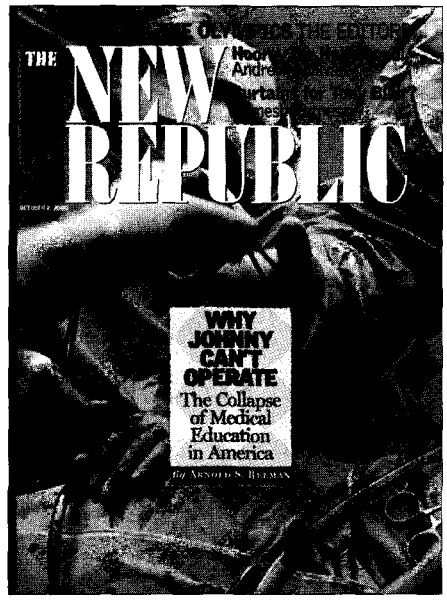
ROBERT A. BURTON, M.D.
Sausalito, California

TO THE EDITORS:

I am a retired anesthesiologist who identifies very closely with most of Arnold S. Relman's article. But I think he falls short in his "hand slap" of the Department of Health and Human Services. In my experience, even when it was called the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, there was a constant effort to reduce the payment for physicians' services. Private insurers merely picked up the behavior pattern set by the legislators and administration officials, which focused entirely on the budget and the total amount being spent on medical care. We must realize that the current system of paying for medical care, whether public or private, is failing badly. Then we must create a new system that will offer care to all who need it and will pay adequately for that care. The latter cannot be an afterthought any longer.

About ten years ago, I took a typewriter to be serviced. The serviceman's charge for inspecting and repairing it exceeded the amount that Medicare and Medicaid would allow for my services per hour, even if the patient was especially sick.

MARVIN J. NOBLE, M.D.
Dallas, Texas



ARNOLD S. RELMAN REPLIES:

I don't share Robert A. Burton's pessimism about the future of the medical profession, although I certainly believe things are going to get worse for us physicians before they get better. The fact remains, however, that the practice of medicine is still one of the most challenging and rewarding of all human callings. I therefore believe it will continue to attract its share of the best and brightest of our young people. What the profession's leadership must now do is persuade physicians to join the health care movement that will surely begin soon, as the failure of our present system becomes clear. Among the goals of such reform will be the development of a better compensation method that will deal with the issues raised by Marvin J. Noble and with a myriad of other problems concerning payment for medical services. Major changes are needed, but I don't believe they are as "monumental" or as hopeless as some might think.

Between the lines

TO THE EDITORS:

Stephen Metcalf touches on a critically important area of concern to the nation: teaching our children to read ("Remedial Ed," October 2). We commend THE NEW REPUBLIC for focusing on this often neglected topic. However, as scientists and clinicians who have devoted our professional lives to caring for children and adults with reading disability, we were surprised by the tenor of the article.

Extraordinary strides have been made in our understanding of reading and of reading disability, with direct implications for the classroom. Most impressive has been the "depoliticization" of reading and the gathering of scientific consensus on the nature of reading difficulties and effective remediation approaches. Two recent national bipartisan blue-ribbon panels, the National Research Council Committee on Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children and the National Reading Panel, came to converging conclusions. Both support the overriding importance of teaching children the basic sound structure of spoken and written language and the need for a balanced reading program. The National Reading Panel, in its unprecedented, comprehensive review of the scientific literature on teaching reading, concluded that systematic, explicit instruction in phonemic awareness and phonics, integrated into a balanced program, is highly effective in teaching children to read. The progress in the science of reading, which now holds the promise of a new era of evidence-based education, is something in which all Americans can take pride.

The research, by scores of investigators, has been bipartisan. Additionally, in our own appearances before congressional groups, we have been impressed by the bipartisan nature of the discourse and support for evidence-based education. Dr. G. Reid Lyon has provided the intellectual capital, the energy, and the commitment to making a reality the dreams of all of us to help all children to read. Our hope is that the bipartisan nature of teaching children to read will remain on a scientific and educational plane and not become a political football. We have come too far to allow that to happen.

BENNETT A. SHAYWITZ, M.D.
Professor of Pediatrics and Neurology
Co-director
Yale Center for the Study of Learning and Attention

SALLY E. SHAYWITZ, M.D.
Professor of Pediatrics
Co-director
Yale Center for the Study of Learning and Attention
New Haven, Connecticut

TO THE EDITORS:

Stephen Metcalf's hatchet job on Eric Hanushek falls below TNR quality standards. Hanushek's analyses of the limited effects of class-size reduction on educational performance are important. Most have met high standards of scholarly review. His conclusion is consistent with trends over the last decades of sharp declines in class size alongside minimal improvements in educational outcomes. Yet Metcalf does not confront the evidence Hanushek amasses but instead dismisses him as an ideologue. The student gains

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that have sometimes emerged from class-size reductions (as in the Tennessee STAR experiment) do not imply that general reductions nationwide will yield benefits anywhere near their high costs. The positive experimental evidence indicates that gains vary by grade level and type of student, suggesting that class-size reductions should be targeted, not implemented across the board. In addition, large-scale reductions in class size will likely lower the average quality of teachers: first, because to hire the additional teachers school districts must reach into the lower-quality segment of the teacher pool; and, second, because a given budget will be spread among a higher number of teachers, thereby limiting potential increases in teacher salaries.

JANE HANNAWAY
Director
Education Policy Center
Urban Institute

ROBERT I. LERMAN
Director
Labor and Social Policy Center
Urban Institute
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITORS:

Stephen Metcalf's article doesn't use arguments against Douglas Carnine's intellectual position. Metcalf simply calls Carnine a "fanatic" and says George W. Bush, in seeking advice from Carnine, has "thrown a sop to extremists." The article's name-calling is crudest when Metcalf uses a quotation to liken Carnine—who has entirely mainstream views on astronomy, biology, and the other sciences—to one of the "religious fanatics who know nothing about science." Carnine is known in the field of educational policy as an ardent supporter of scientific evidence and rigor.

BILL EVERS
Hoover Institution
Stanford University
Stanford, California

STEPHEN METCALF REPLIES:

Since they are chief proponents of the current "phonological processing" vogue and among the recipients of G. Reid Lyon's research largesse, I'm not surprised that Bennett A. and Sally E. Shaywitz were eager to respond to my piece. Of course literacy is not a strictly partisan issue, but the essential questions remain: *(a)* Does research by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) stand up to scrutiny, or is it an excuse for headline-ready simplifications? and *(b)* have Bush and the GOP appropri-

continued on page 48

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TRB

FROM WASHINGTON

Far Gone

I HAVE NO IDEA who's going to win this election, but it's telling that Al Gore spent part of last week in Tennessee and Oregon. In this economy, with President Clinton's approval ratings still celestial and a rookie as an opponent, Gore should be a shoo-in. Computer models predict a double-digit win. Instead, the vice president is in his home state, grasping at tiny blips upward in the polls.

It doesn't take a genius to figure out why. Gore's candidacy is simply too liberal for the country. After a career of extreme moderation, Gore chose the most important campaign of his life to run as Ted Kennedy. Given everything we know about American politics and everything Clinton proved about survival in a polarized, conservative polity, his decision is truly baffling. Forget the kiss. Ignore the multiple-personality disorder of the debates. This election, like most, will be decided on the issues. And Gore's newfound leftism is almost perfectly designed to scare the independent voters he so badly needs.

In retrospect, you can see what he was trying to do. His predicament is shared by left-of-center parties everywhere. In the 1970s and '80s, the old redistributionist, welfarist model of liberal politics was clearly teetering. As the New Right took over in Britain and America, liberals went back into ideological therapy. After some improvisation (Mondale, Hart, Dukakis, Tsongas), the Clinton-Blair model emerged. The left would junk its soak-the-rich rhetoric in favor of a more unifying middle-class theme. It would get tough on crime and earn credentials with welfare reform and fiscal prudence while scaring centrists about right-wing intolerance and entitlement cuts. For a while, it worked. Look, Ma, a responsible Democrat! Part of the excitement of Clinton-Blair, after all, was the sheer novelty of a left-wing party behaving like a right-wing one. Conservatives were strangely flattered, and liberals were so happy to be back in power that they sucked up the political pain.

But the problem with novelty is that it wears off. Once liberals had inoculated themselves against liberalism, they had a dilemma. If liberalism was not about taxing the rich to give to the poor, if it was not about catering to various victim groups, if it did not want government to provide more feather bedding for the middle class, then what exactly was it for? Clinton fudged this for a while through his immense skill in telling his base what it wanted to hear while doling out poll-tested microgoodies (school uniforms, family leave, AmeriCorps) that cost little and appealed to middle-class morality. He was also rescued by the mass conversion of Republicans to right-wing fundamentalism.

But then the right got serious again, and Gore was left to square Clinton's circle without Clinton's political skill. Coming into the convention, Gore saw what Tony Blair was beginning to see across the pond: The left's natural constituency, long ignored, was AWOL. In Britain, Labour voters didn't show up for midterm local and European elections, giving the Tories huge gains. Similarly, Gore must have looked at the polls in August and gulped. His support among Democrats was far lower than George W. Bush's among Republicans—and it was killing him. Once Bush co-opted New Democrat themes and muted the religious right, the pincers on Gore tightened even further. After all, if the election were between two New Democrats, why not vote for the one who wasn't connected to Clinton?

So Gore tried another tack: He moved to the left. It had worked against Bradley. The polls showed wide dissatisfaction with HMOs and drug companies. Why not bundle them together into a populist pitch that would tap into middle-class angst and rally the party base? Besides, it would help differentiate Gore from Clinton in a way he badly wanted. And, to shore up the right, Lieberman was deputed to go on about God.

Lieberman helped. Gore's convention speech also helped—especially since he spoke so fast most listeners didn't have a chance to absorb the huge risk the speech represented. But since then reality has bitten. What voters have heard from Gore since August has been one leftist theme after another. He has lambasted the most innovative industries in America. He has demonized the "wealthiest 1 percent," without whom there would be no surplus. He has pandered to the elderly. He has given every Democratic interest group its very own salve for victimhood—hate crimes for gays, race preferences for blacks, abortion absolutism for feminists. And he has ruled out any real reform of Medicare or Social Security. No wonder centrist voters have qualms.

Gore argues that his big new spending plans won't bust the budget. But it doesn't matter. Voters don't pick up a calculator to see whose budget plans add up. They listen to themes. Gore's themes help him with his base but hurt him with everyone else, which is why he has finally begun to protest that he is not for "big government." In the first two debates, independent voters preferred Bush to Gore by a clear margin. Gore's mild recovery in the polls came after the third debate, when independents picked him as the winner. But they are still uneasy. A Zogby poll in early October asked voters what they thought of 25 value-driven issues, from gun control to abortion. On most, Gore had positioned his party to the left. And on 20 of those issues, from Social Security reform to teacher-testing, voters backed the Bush position.

For Gore, of all people, to play this leftist game is ironic. This is a man who once called homosexuality "abnormal," abortion "arguably" the taking of a human life, and the Gulf war vital. In the Clinton years, he pioneered welfare reform and downsizing government. So his sudden reversion to old liberalism doesn't only lose him votes in the center, it plays into the hands of those who see him as an opportunist. It hasn't even won him back the Naderites. And he disappoints Perot-McCain voters who wanted to see campaign finance reform headline Gore's campaign. Instead, we have Gore holding up as an example of his ideal American a senior citizen named Winnie who chooses to collect tin cans rather than get help from her wealthy son. He's fighting for *her*?

Earth to Gore: The left is dead as a governing coalition. It lives on in the twitching carcass of its own institutional structures—teachers' unions, feminist activists, gay victimologists, black churches, faculty clubs—but it has no overarching, popular argument to win power. Populism won't work, either, in an era of plenty and promise. What will work is a moderate, ameliorative, me-too liberalism of the Clinton variety. Either Gore's ego was too big or his advisers were too left-wing to adopt this Clintonian game plan—even though it came buttressed with all the advantages of incumbency and Gore's own blue-chip qualifications for office. Yes, Gore is his own man now. And, yes, his task this year has been a tricky one. But the corollary is a somewhat brutal truth. If he wins, it's a personal coup. If he loses, he has no one to blame but himself.

ANDREW SULLIVAN

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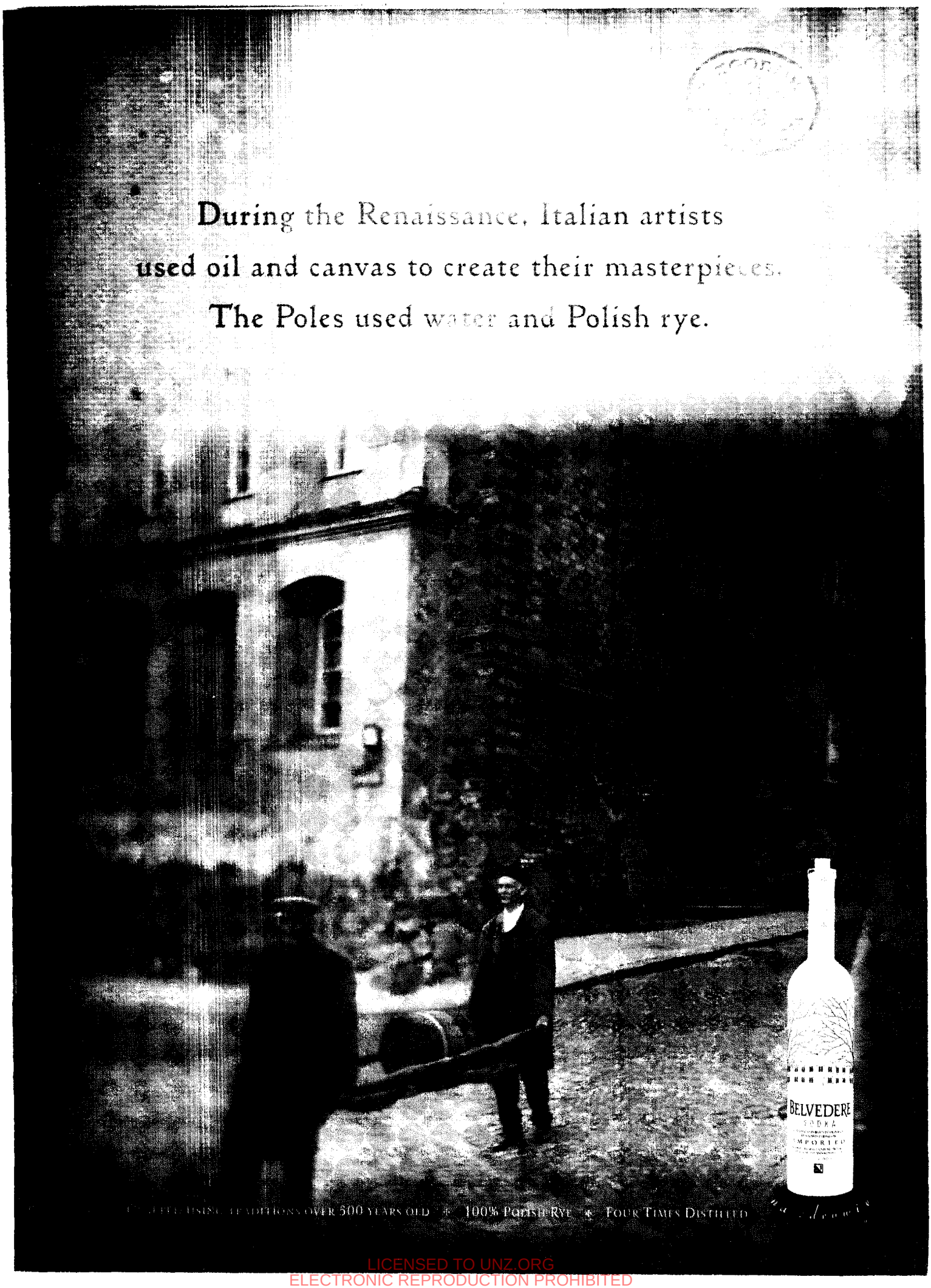
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Unsafe at Any Speed

THERE ARE UNSAINTLY words and deeds that only saints permit themselves; saints, and individuals who in their own eyes are saints. No presidential candidate in recent memory has run more fervently on his own sanctity than Ralph Nader. He is no longer a reformer, a consumer advocate warning about the indifference of American corporations to the quality of American life, and about the influence of American corporations on American politics. No, he is now an all-purpose American radical, with a single explanation for every feature of American experience, and an appetite for heightening the contradictions—an American "dissident" (as Barbara Ehrenreich writes in a fawning preface to *The Ralph Nader Reader*). That is not austerity in Nader's demeanor; it is arrogance. And it is not independence; it is a doctrinaire rehearsal of the "progressive" litany of complaints against liberalism and capitalism, and of course against its own failure to capture the imagination of the American people. Nader is an archaism loosed upon a generation that knows not the 1960s or the 1940s. He is profiting from globalization as much as any corporate prince of darkness.

The thick fog of righteousness that surrounds Nader makes it hard to discern that this self-styled savior of democracy is preaching cynicism about democracy. The Democratic Party and the Republican Party, he says, are only "apparently distinct." He prefers to think of them as "a political duopoly," which he wittily describes as "the DemRep Party." They are the same because they "feed at the same corporate trough." For a party's or an individual's relation to a corporation, and more generally to money, is all you need to know. Everything follows from this one relation. This is a paranoid view of the world, a conspiratorial economicism, for which nothing is what it seems, and only a handful of epistemologically privileged comrades and movie stars know the truth, and they are forever muzzled. Nader espouses "deep democracy," which is the democracy that nobody except him and his little movement practices. He has ideals. Everybody else has interests.

It is the height of moral and political mischief to suggest that it makes no difference whether George W. Bush or Al Gore is the next president of the United States. Civil rights, reproductive rights, gay rights, the environment, genocide in the post-cold-war world: Who really believes that a Bush administration and a Gore administration would behave similarly in these fraught regions of policy? When Nader asserts that there is no difference between Bush and Gore, he is reviving the old radical axiom that the worse, the better. Perhaps he thinks that a Bush presidency is necessary to provoke this nation of dupes at last to adopt a radical agenda. If so, he understands precisely nothing about the political history of this country. Naderism represents the emotional satisfaction of the American left at the expense of the social and economic satisfaction of women, blacks, gays, and poor people in America. We say, the worse, the worse.

One of the strange things about Nader's notion that he is qualified for the presidency is that he is a man without any discernible views on foreign policy. Or he was until last week, when he proclaimed that Israel is entirely responsible for the recent violence in the Middle East and that Gore is "cowardly" for not saying so. Now that the Arab-American vote matters tactically, Nader has discovered the rest of the globe, and has decided to play the lousy game of identity politics that he used to scorn. "The curious thing of course is that though of Lebanese parentage, Nader has never made himself part of any Arab or Arab-American campaign ... [and] he does not devote much time to foreign policy." Those are the astute words of Edward Said, writing (in praise of the dissident, naturally) in *Al-Ahram Weekly* in Cairo a few months ago.

There is something even more curious than Nader's sudden pandering. (Excuse us, his sudden hunger for Levantine peace.) It turns out that Nader's cheapness on this question, and his conspiratorial view of the world, go back very far. They go back to March 1960, when the left's gaunt hero published an article called "Business Is Deserting America," in which he warned ominously of "our ingrained gullibility to internationalism." The remarkable thing is that Nader published his piece in *The American Mercury*, an obscenely anti-Semitic magazine. Nader's piece appeared in the same months that the magazine was publishing a series called "Termites of the Cross," which was full of such teachings as:

> As soon as anyone demonstrates that he is willing to expose the enemies of communism or world Zionism, their vast machines start working to advance his interests. The Disciples of Judas do not even have to be openly pro-Communist or pro-Zionist to qualify for the big payoff....

The youthful mistake of the saint? Perhaps; but neither Gore nor Bush ever made quite such a mistake. In this respect, there is truly no difference between them. ■

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NOTEBOOK

HALL MONITOR: Once again, *The New York Times* seems unable to hide its soft spot for deceased American supporters of Soviet totalitarianism. The death two weeks ago of Gus Hall, the longtime leader of the Communist Party USA, resulted in a strange *Times* editorial titled, a little sentimentally, "America's Bolshevik," in which the editors called Hall's life "a genuine American tale." If they mean that Hall was born in Minnesota to radical Finnish immigrants, then yes, it's a genuine American tale. But, for most of his life, Hall dedicated himself not to serving his country but to working for Joseph Stalin and his successors. The paper of record explained that Hall's "sclerotic orthodoxy" (in plainer English, his lifetime of lies) stemmed from his "native Midwestern stubbornness." Stalinism, a form of folksiness? The *Times* somehow forgot to mention that, among other things, Hall helped Stalin cover up the brutal murders of hundreds of Hall's fellow American Finns in the 1930s. Even more amazing was the publication on the *Times*' op-ed page that same day of a piece by Victor Navasky, publisher and editorial director of *The Nation*, in which Navasky recalled a visit with the "amiable" Hall, who refused to let him look at the Communist Party's books in order to investigate whether the party received money from Moscow. Hall explained that naturally all Communist parties "sent [their] files" for safekeeping to Moscow, and he later refused Navasky permission to examine them. Since then, of course, there has surfaced a rich treasure trove of documentation revealing the extent of not only the Soviet subsidy but also the service provided by American Communists to the Moscow espionage apparatus. Navasky's anger, however, is not at Hall and the Communists but at an unnamed "cadre of cold war historians," whom he argues seized "fragments from cold war archives, ambiguous intercepts from cables between Moscow and its American-based agents, and other ephemera" to prove the party was "at the center of a nest of spies," conclusions that Navasky claims (in fine Hall-like manner) are "still in dispute." Would the *Times*, we wonder, print a column by someone who believed that the truth about the Holocaust or slavery was "still in dispute"? The parallel holds, because the truth has in fact caused numerous historians to change their earlier estimate of American communism's tie to the Soviet espionage networks. Yet our most influential newspaper allows a prominent writer to play his tiresome and sickening games with history.

FOURTH ESTATE: When it endorsed George W. Bush this week, the *Seattle Times* had a little explaining to do. After all, as its endorsement duly noted, the paper backed Michael Dukakis in 1988, Bill Clinton in 1992 and 1996, and, in this year's Democratic primary, the more liberal of the two candidates, Bill Bradley. So why the sudden affection for Bush? The *Times* said it was because the Republican was the more ethical and pro-free-trade candidate. Fair enough. But, as the alternative paper *Seattle Weekly* pointed out not long after the *Times* endorsement ran, there may have been another, unstated reason: Bush, unlike Gore, favors a full repeal of the estate tax. This, it so happens, is the pet cause of Frank Blethen Jr., publisher of the *Seattle Times*. Blethen, who says he opposes the estate tax because he wants to keep the newspaper in his family, has donated advertising space in the *Times* to estate-tax foes, maintains an anti-estate-tax website called deathtax.com, and has lobbied Congress for the tax's repeal. Any chance the Sulzbergers will be similarly swayed?

BANKRUPT: The Bush campaign has a new line of attack against Al Gore on Social Security: The vice president is reckless, because he's not doing anything to forestall the program's bankruptcy. And some in the media, accustomed to reflexively describing any Democratic defense of Social Security as demagoguery, have bought Bush's line. "It's predictable," said "Hardball" host Chris Matthews this week. "Whenever there's a presidential or a congressional election, the last couple weeks the Democrats accuse the Republicans of undermining Social Security." Whatever you think of Bush's reforms, the pundits note, at least he's trying to save the system for our grandchildren. Actually, the truth is almost the exact opposite. Gore's plan is to take a chunk of the budget surplus and use it to pay down the national debt. This reduces the amount of money the government has to pay in future interest costs, and these savings will help pay for future Social Security benefits. To be sure, Gore's plan does not eliminate Social Security's long-term deficit, but it does alleviate it. Bush's plan does the reverse. It would allow workers to keep for themselves a portion of the Social Security taxes they would otherwise have paid into the trust fund. This, obviously, would make Social Security's fiscal problems worse: Less money would be coming into the trust fund, but just as much would be going out. Bush is often lauded for his "courage" in touching Social Security's third rail, but it's Gore who, by committing himself to paying down the debt, is foregoing money that could be used for politically popular spending programs or tax cuts. Bush, on the other hand, by draining $1 trillion from the trust fund, would hasten Social Security's insolvency. When Gore has pointed this out, Bush and his campaign have called the charge a scare tactic. And now Bush accuses Gore of saddling the government with $40 trillion in debt. But Bush doesn't mention that this number is accumulated over 50 years and that *any* Social Security plan would require the government to transfer money to Social Security. Bush adviser Martin Feldstein, for instance, has a plan that would require $337 trillion in transfers over that period. What was Bush saying about a scare tactic?

YET ANOTHER ARGUMENT FOR AL GORE'S COLLEGE-TUITION TAX CREDIT: "Any other time I would have never chosen to do this, but it was a point and time in my life that I needed to pay taxes, I had legal funds—had taxes to pay.... I'm a single mother now with two little boys that I really need to support, and hopefully, I'm wanting to put them through college and maybe set up a college fund."
—Paula Jones, explaining to CNN why she posed nude for the December issue of *Penthouse*

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NOT DUMB ENOUGH:

AL GORE: I don't want to raise any questions about his [Bush's] capacity.

KATIE COURIC: Well, your surrogates are. Your surrogates are questioning....

GORE: Well, not on my behalf. Not on my behalf.

—"Today," October 20

"One senior Gore strategist called the assault on Bush's fitness for the job a 'whole new front in the campaign.' It will be waged largely by high-profile congressional Democrats."—Jonathan Karl, "Inside Politics," October 20

"[Bush is] unable to connect the dots.... I don't think he gets it."—Senator Joseph Biden, *The Dallas Morning News*, October 24

COMPASSIONATE CONSERVATISM: "Now [Al Gore is] saying, 'I'm with you guys on guns.' In any other time or place, you'd be looking for a lynching mob."—National Rifle Association President Charlton Heston, speaking at a rally in Walker, Michigan, on October 17. In response, audience members chanted, "Let's do it!" and "I've got a rope!"

SMELL TEST: "The stench of big money pervades American politics."—Nader 2000 campaign website

"[It is] some sort of independent expenditure [that] we have nothing to do with."—Nader, appearing on CNN's "Inside Politics" on October 25, referring to the $320,000 national pro-Nader ad campaign bankrolled by his millionaire friend Greg MacArthur

ENTHUSIASMS: Through an editing error in Nathan Glazer's review of *The Seduction of Space* by Joseph Rykwert ("Love and the City," October 30), his sentence "Rykwert reserves his enthusiasm for most of them [capital cities built on the basis of a single unified plan]" was changed to its opposite, "Rykwert writes enthusiastically about most of them." ■

VINT'S WEEK

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Why McCain's consultant flopped in New York.

Murphy's Law

By Franklin Foer

THOMAS FUCHS

When Rick Lazio hired whiz consultant Mike Murphy last May to run his Senate campaign, the media hailed it as a coup. New York Governor George Pataki's consultants, whom Lazio had been expected to choose, were considered parochial and stale. Murphy, by contrast, had just stepped off John McCain's bus and was being hailed as Lee Atwater, Ralph Reed, and James Carville all rolled into one. A 5,800-word front-page story in *The Washington Post* trumpeted his strategic genius: "Given little more to stop the Bush juggernaut than a charismatic candidate, a comfortable bus, and a talent for working the media, Murphy kept driving the jerry-built contraption until the wheels came off."

Upon arriving in New York, Murphy immediately set out to replicate the McCain magic with Lazio. He advised the Long Island congressman to make campaign finance reform the defining issue of his candidacy. He gave him a bus of his own, the "Mainstream Express"; instructed him to chat up the press; and urged him to go hard after his opponent, Hillary Clinton—much as he had recommended that McCain go after Bush in South Carolina.

It was a terrific strategy—for a tireless campaign finance crusader capable of charming reporters with his war heroism and blunt wit. Unfortunately, none of that describes Rick Lazio. Murphy's McCain strategy, in fact, has been a horrible fit for his new client, who has fallen behind in nearly every recent poll. When the boyish Lazio needed to convey heft and maturity, Murphy supplied him with cheesy gimmicks; when he needed to play the nice guy and allow Hillary's icy condescension to come to the fore, he attacked her, placing the first lady in the one role in which she is most popular—the role of victim.

Why has mad genius Murphy grafted the McCain strategy onto such an unsuitable host? Perhaps because he believes the blueprint that catapulted the Arizona senator from long shot to near miss is ingenious enough to elect any candidate. Or perhaps because the familiar gimmicks serve as calling cards, advertisements for Murphy's influence over the campaign. Either way, one thing is clear: The consultant has swallowed the candidate. As Murphy told *The New York Post*: "The bottom line ... is, if we win I'll be the hero, if we lose I'll be the goat." Mike Murphy has run the campaign with little regard for Lazio, because in his mind the race isn't really about Lazio. It's about him.

Murphy acquired his political skills as a twentysomething in Reagan's Washington. After dropping out of Georgetown's School of Foreign Service, he took up with the liberal-bashing adman Arthur Finkelstein and the National Conservative Political Action Committee. Like Grover Norquist, Ralph Reed, and other young righties before him, he learned how to use shrill rhetoric and melodramatic techniques to hijack the media's attention.

By the age of 23, Murphy was in business for himself, working for Congress's most committed right-wingers, including Jesse Helms. Over the years, he perfected the art of bomb-throwing. "Make the charge and let the other guy spend a million dollars to explain it," he once told *The Washington Post*'s Howard Kurtz. Indeed, Murphy has produced some of the most breathtakingly aggressive ads in American history. One, for Michigan Senator Spencer Abraham, called an opponent "shallow" and a "socialite." Another, for Iowa Governor Terry Branstadt, accused an opponent of "refusing to prosecute crimes against children." And Murphy produced his most infamous spot for Oliver North's 1994 senatorial bid: "Why can't Chuck Robb tell the truth? About the cocaine parties where Robb said he never saw drugs.... Or about the beauty queen in the hotel room in New York." The ad came complete with an image of a *Playboy* cover.

In addition to the frontal assault, Murphy's other hallmark has been the gimmick. While various aides claim they helped come up with the idea of McCain's "Straight Talk Express"

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bus tour, it was an undeniably Murphyesque flourish. In the 1996 general election, after all, he had urged Bob Dole to embark on a "Tax Cut Express." Earlier that year, as the prime consultant for Lamar Alexander's primary bid, he loaded the campaign with similar quirks and political theater. He dressed the candidate and his volunteers in red plaid shirts. At events, he arranged for Alexander to bang out folksy tunes on a piano. And he encouraged Alexander's tireless repetition of the slogan "ABC, Alexander Beats Clinton." It worked. Alexander grabbed the media's attention—at least for a brief winter's moment. Finishing a close third in the New Hampshire primary, the former Tennessee governor seemed poised to upset Bob Dole's coronation. Yet while the gimmicks got Alexander noticed, they gradually began to grate—and, worse, they started to diminish the candidate. One consultant who has worked with Murphy told me, "Alexander went from being a man of some substance to an empty plaid shirt. Murphy and his cheap tricks turned him into a joke."

In fact, complaints of egoism have swirled around Murphy in most of his campaigns. Twice—George Bush in 1992 and Dole in 1996—he quit presidential races in a huff when the candidate didn't follow his advice. Both times, memos by Murphy containing his neglected counsel were subsequently leaked to reporters. A mere three days after McCain dropped out of this year's primary, the long *Post* profile of Murphy appeared, in which the consultant took credit for the campaign's successes and blamed others for its failures. "It was pure fantasy," says one of his colleagues.

But at least with McCain all the clever gimmicks—the "straight talk," the town-hall meetings, the confetti-drenched rallies, the bus—flowed naturally from the Arizona senator's heroic history, maverick reputation, and jokester persona. As a badly out-financed insurgent angling for attention, McCain had to break with the boring old campaign mold. And Murphy was the perfect sidekick—sitting next to the candidate on the bus, trading jokes, interjecting spin, entertaining the press. If Murphy occasionally stepped on McCain's lines or too aggressively hogged the spotlight, it hardly mattered. Nobody would ever believe the witty, intemperate McCain was a consultant's front man. "To be honest," says Dan Schnur, McCain's campaign communications director, "we needed Murphy there to fill dead time, so that McCain could take a bite of his doughnut or rest his voice."

With Lazio, however, all the time is more or less dead time. The Suffolk County congressman doesn't need gimmicks to gain press attention; since he's running against Hillary Clinton, the media is already fixated. What "Little Ricky," as pundits have dubbed him, doesn't have is anything remotely approaching McCain's stature. As a result, he appears dwarfed by his omnipresent consultant—reduced to the role of Murphy's marionette (or, as Murphy prefers to refer to his clients, "the meat"). While most consultants remain at headquarters, out of the public eye, Murphy has hit the trail. He has logged hundreds of miles on the bus, always hovering by the candidate. He's even interjected himself into Lazio's press conferences. The perceived dynamic between the two men informs press coverage of much of what Lazio does. "For now," wrote *The New York Times* in August, "Mr. Murphy's strategy is to position Mr. Lazio in the center, independent of the Republican right wing, and to build up his confidence for prime time." Last month, *The New York Post* added: "The fact that Lazio would try to make soft money a big issue isn't a big surprise, because the Republican hopeful has been guided by Mike Murphy, chief strategist for Sen. John McCain's failed presidential campaign."

And so Lazio molds himself to Murphy, rather than the other way around. He rides a bus whose name is ripped off from the one McCain rode—but the campaign has limited reporters' access to it, because Lazio lacks McCain's gift for spontaneous gab. Lazio champions outlawing soft money—even though he was never an outspoken advocate of campaign finance reform in Congress. And his speeches and blast faxes are filled with gratuitous whacks at the first lady—despite Lazio's nice-guy reputation and Clinton's proven gift for suffering her way to political success. "They tried to make him into something he isn't," complains New York Republican consultant Joseph Mercurio, who describes the campaign's strategy as "wrongheaded."

One Murphy-inspired moment, in fact, may have cost Lazio the campaign. During his first debate with Clinton, Lazio yanked a document from his blazer pocket and walked over to her podium. "Let's sign it. It's—it's the New York Freedom of [*sic*] Soft Money Pact." When Clinton hedged, a look of terror spreading across her face, Lazio grew ever louder, bellowing in her face, pointing his finger at her. "Right here, sign it right now." Widely viewed after the incident as a bully and borderline sexual harasser, Lazio saw his poll numbers go south almost immediately. "If we lose this race," says one Republican consultant, "we can thank Murphy for squandering the opportunity."

Lazio still has an outside shot at victory, albeit a much slimmer one than he had this summer. But, even if he pulls off the upset, Murphy talks about getting out of the consulting racket to go write Hollywood screenplays. And, while friends scoff at the idea ("Hard to see it," says the Hudson Institute's Marshall Wittmann), it does have a certain logic. Hollywood, after all, may be the only place in the country able to accommodate Murphy's ego. ■

Vermont Dispatch

Green Day

By Sarah Stewart Taylor

There are essentially two ways to interpret Ralph Nader's third-party movement. In the more benign interpretation, the Naderites don't want to destroy the Democratic Party, they simply want to sharpen it. Had Al Gore just hewed further to the left, Nader wouldn't have run. In the less benign interpretation, the Naderites don't want to

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influence the Democratic Party, they want to kill it. There is no Democrat liberal enough to satisfy Nader's Raiders, because their ultimate goal is to replace the Democrats with a new party—America's first major party of the radical left.

Think interpretation number two is too harsh? Consider the race for governor in Vermont. It features a Democratic incumbent, Howard Dean, who has brought such progressive reforms as health care for almost every child in the state and civil union for gays and lesbians. It features a far-right Republican challenger, Ruth Dwyer, surfing a wave of anti-civil-union backlash. And it features a Naderite, Progressive Party candidate Anthony Pollina, who doesn't really care that his candidacy may hand Dwyer the race. He wants to take Dean and the Democrats down. And Nader, who was in Vermont earlier this month to talk up Pollina's candidacy, is helping him do so.

POLLINA, AN ADVOCATE of campaign finance reform and environmental protection who once ran for Congress as a Democrat, is part of a burgeoning third-party movement in Vermont. The Progressive Party (formerly called the Progressive Coalition) has long been a force in famously groovy Burlington, controlling the mayor's office and city council ever since socialist Bernie Sanders was elected to the city's top post in 1981. But in recent years the grassroots party has expanded from Burlington city government into all of Chittenden County, the state's most populous region, and it currently holds four seats in the state House of Representatives, in addition to Vermont's only U.S. House seat—which is occupied by Sanders, the House's lone independent. As a result, Vermont probably has the strongest left-wing third party in America.

In the most recent poll, Pollina is garnering a mere 6 percent of the vote. But that might be enough to hand the election to Dwyer. Although Dean has a nine-point lead over his Republican challenger, he is getting only 48 percent of the vote, and the state constitution mandates that, in the event no candidate receives 50 percent, the legislature decides the election. While Democrats currently hold a slim majority in the state House and Senate, it's quite possible that Republicans—boosted by a bloc of anti-civil-union voters with huge TAKE BACK VERMONT signs plastered on their houses and barns—will control the general assembly come January, just in time to put Dwyer in office should Dean fail to garner a majority.

Vermont Democrats are nervous. "In a year in which Ruth Dwyer's supporters are clearly energized and in a year where there's a lot of divisiveness over civil unions, it's created a dynamic where Dwyer's stronger. Anthony's presence definitely scrambles the math," gripes Mark Michaud, executive director of the Vermont Democratic Party. "Every Vermonter who casts a vote for Anthony Pollina is putting Ruth Dwyer one step closer to being governor of Vermont."

That's a frightening prospect. Although Vermont Republicans are traditionally moderate—Republican Senator James Jeffords, for instance, has such a strong record on gay rights that the Human Rights Campaign has issued a "dual endorsement" of him and his Democratic opponent, who's openly gay—Dwyer is most definitely not. A farmer and former state representative, Dwyer built up a very conservative voting record in the Vermont legislature. In this year's campaign, she's run hard to the right, drawing fire over the summer for asserting that the Vermont chapter of the National Education Association promotes a "homosexual agenda."

Indeed, although Pollina adamantly denies it, his differences with Dean pale in comparison with Dean's differences with Dwyer. While Pollina favors gay marriage and complains that Dean and the legislature didn't go far enough with this year's civil-union bill, Dean is the only governor in America to sign such landmark legislation, and he has a stellar record on civil rights. Dwyer, meanwhile, is virulently opposed to the civil-union bill and has pledged to put the issue to a public referendum, which would likely result in its repeal. While Pollina criticizes Dean for failing to back single-payer health care, the governor has ensured that every low- and middle-income child in the state has access to health care. Dwyer, for her part, says she would abolish some state health care programs and return Vermont to a "consumer-driven, high-risk pool system." And, while Pollina says Dean has too often compromised with developers, Dwyer believes aspects of state environmental laws violate property rights and has attacked Dean for helping preserve about 130,000 acres of land in northern Vermont.

But Pollina saves some of his harshest words for Dean's record on campaign finance reform. Dean had initially pledged to abide by campaign spending limits in exchange for public funds—as provided by Vermont's landmark campaign finance reform law, which Pollina championed and Dean signed in 1997. But in August Dean changed his mind after a federal judge threw out parts of the law, including provisions capping spending by candidates not taking public funds and limiting out-of-state contributions. Concerned that Dwyer, who never agreed to the public-funding scheme, would raise vast sums from national groups angry about civil union, Dean gave back the public money and abandoned the spending limits—raising some $600,000. Pollina's campaign describes Dean's move as "an about-face for a politician who had the gall to cite his commitment to campaign finance reform at the convention in L.A." But, as Dean campaign manager Kate O'Connor says of Pollina, who has received $262,000 in state funds for his campaign, "Anthony Pollina wouldn't be running if Howard Dean hadn't signed the law."

SUCH IRONIES DON'T carry much weight with Pollina. Indeed, the way he and his supporters talk, it sounds as if the Pollina camp might actually prefer for Dean to lose. After all, a Republican governor overturning civil union and the rest of Dean's progressive record might radicalize Vermont's left and help Pollina's burgeoning Progressive Party take off. According to Pollina's campaign manager, Chris Pearson, some people believe a Dwyer governorship would help organize liberal voters in the state. As Pollina explained to a "Contemporary Social Problems" class at the Community College of Vermont on the day I caught up with him in late September, "It can be very difficult to create change. Democ-

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Overseas, homeownership is more of a recent awakening.

The difference is in the financing. In America, you can buy a home with as little as 3% down. In Germany, it's typically 35 to 40%. And 50% in Japan.

In America, your mortgage payments can be stretched out over 30 years. In France, it's more like 15.

In America, we take fixed rates for granted. In Canada, rates are fixed for up to five years, then you have to reapply.

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racy is not always an easy process."

Earlier that day, on Burlington's bustling Church Street, Pollina made his case to passersby. As groups of young students and artists, more than a few with dreadlocks tucked into fanciful Dr. Seuss-style hats, greeted Pollina with words of support, the candidate approached a middle-aged woman and introduced himself, telling her he'd like her vote. The woman frowned. She'd like to give it to him, she said, but she's afraid of helping elect Dwyer. As a gust off Lake Champlain whipped the woman's hair around her face, Pollina made his pitch.

"They are exaggerating the fear of Ruth Dwyer. What do you think would happen if Ruth Dwyer got elected?" he asked, with a provocative lift of his eyebrows. "From everything we've seen, there's no expectation the legislature's going to go off the deep end." It's nice that he's so certain. ■

On the Hill

Debt Relief

By Michael Crowley

Sam Anderson, a gaunt man with a large, frizzy gray beard, is holding up a copy of his documentary comic book, *The Black Holocaust for Beginners.* Before a small but enthusiastic audience, Anderson, a leader of the Black Radical Congress, rails against the "Western imperialist, capitalist powers and corporations that have benefited from slavery." He is followed by a man from something called the Center for Constitutional Rights, who furiously names names: "Barclays Bank, Lloyds of London—all of these companies come directly out of the surplus property generated by the slave trade." Adjua Aiyetoro of the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (N'COBRA) denounces white doctors who ignore the health complaints of their black patients and attributes this and countless other evils to the legacy of slavery. "They robbed and raped Africa like they robbed and raped all the ancestors who came over here," says Aiyetoro, filling the room with a shout of well-honed indignation. "We *will* win reparations! We *won't* give up!"

Welcome to the epicenter of the slavery-reparations movement. After languishing for years on the far margins of political debate, the question of whether the federal government should compensate blacks—either through direct cash payments to descendants of slaves or through broader social programs or trust funds—may be coming soon to front pages near you. For while Aiyetoro's rants sound like the sort of futile venting you'd find at a Nation of Islam rally or an Afrocentric college, he uttered them last month on Capitol Hill, in the decorous hearing room of the House Judiciary Committee.

How can that be? Don't conservative Republicans like Henry Hyde and the House impeachment managers run the Judiciary Committee? Yes, but its ranking Democrat is Detroit Representative John Conyers, who, like many unabashed liberals waiting quietly offstage, will become a powerful committee chairman if Democrats win back the House in November, as many political oddsmakers expect. Last month's event was informal; Republicans would never allow such a hearing to occur officially on their watch. But if Conyers, who has quietly championed reparations for years, does become chairman, he will use his committee platform to take the issue mainstream. "I can assure you that he will take this [issue] up" if Democrats prevail, says Conyers staffer Cynthia Martin. "There will be action."

That's good news for the growing number of black activists, intellectuals, and politicians who believe the federal government should pay massive reparations to the descendants of African slaves. Whether it's good news for American race relations is another matter. Racial politics are more placid today than they have been in years, if not decades. The current presidential campaign has been almost entirely unblemished by Willie Horton-style demagoguery. Affirmative action and political correctness no longer raise tempers the way they did in the early '90s. Crime, welfare, and unemployment rates have plunged, bringing white fear and resentment down with them. Perhaps the calm simply masks white complacency and black cynicism, and public debate about the ugliest chapter in American history might produce a deeper healing. But, given that even a mere presidential apology for slavery remains unutterable and white support for affirmative action is grudging at best, it could also spark a tremendous white backlash and leave America's peaceful and moderately progressive racial consensus in tatters.

Conyers himself isn't new to the reparations cause. Since 1989 he's repeatedly filed legislation calling for a national commission to examine the possibility of reparations and the form they might take. But he says the cause has lately acquired a new credibility. "Even a dozen years ago this was a marginalized issue," Conyers says. "[But] I see a great sea change going on.... Now people are beginning to say, 'Yes, Congressman Conyers, this does deserve to be taken out and considered and resolved."

Conyers is probably right. Long a hobbyhorse of Louis Farrakhan and his various deranged acolytes, the slavery-reparations movement has gained substantial momentum and academic credibility of late. Black leaders have watched with growing resentment as other wronged groups received apologies or paybacks from various governments. These include Japanese-Americans interned during World War II, who were awarded $20,000 apiece in 1988; Jewish Holocaust survivors, who have collected nearly $60 billion from the German government and are successfully seeking the return of looted wealth from the Swiss; and American Indians, who this summer received an apology for maltreatment from the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Korean comfort women (from Japan), Aborigines (from Australia), Inuit (from Canada)—the list could go on and on (and, in the literature and on the websites of reparations activists, it does). Historical research has also made it easier for the descendants of slaves to trace their heritage and thus determine what their

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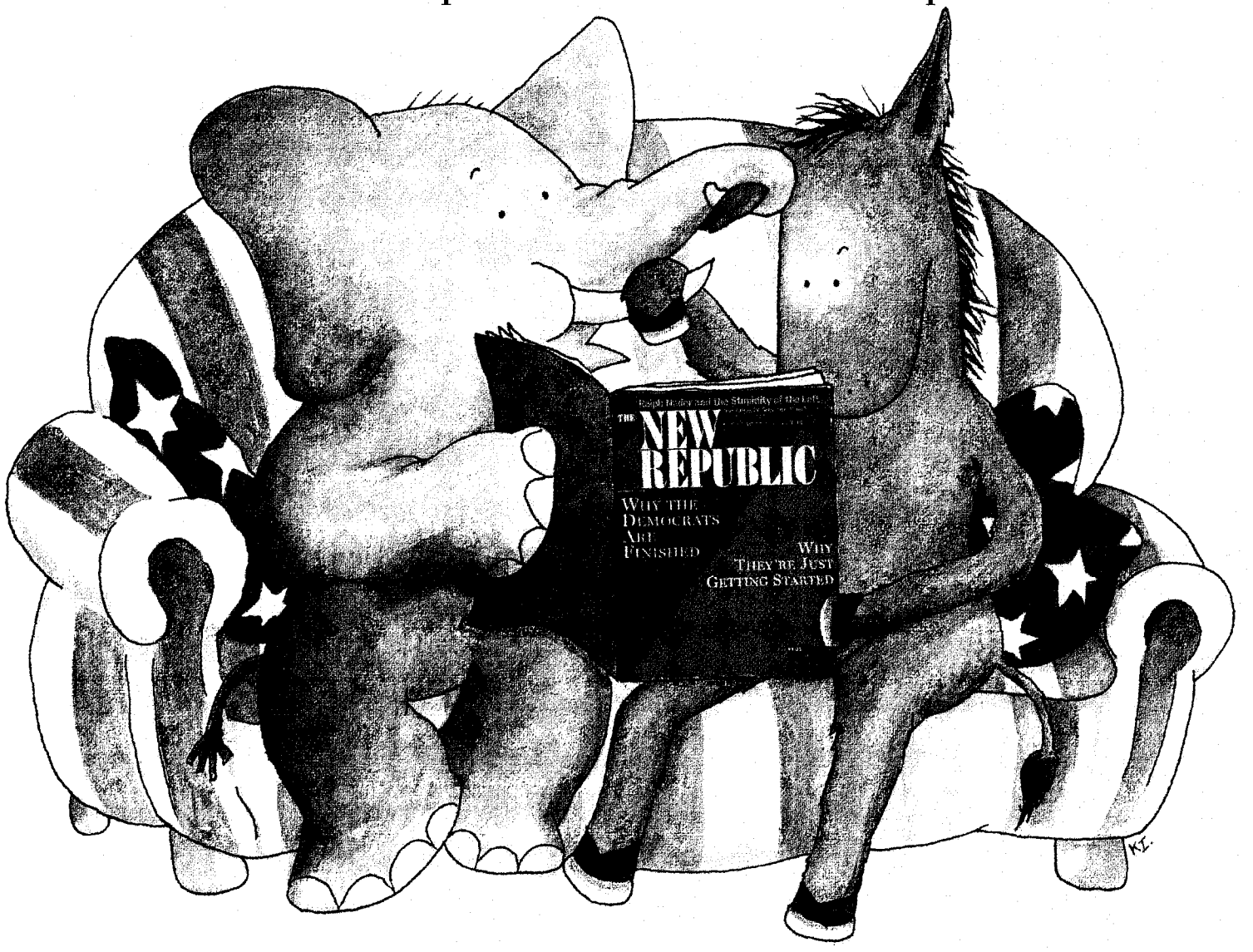

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families might be owed and by whom. And the recent political and legal attacks on affirmative action have forced black politicians and activists to link racial preferences more explicitly to slavery, thus forming the intellectual foundation for reparations.

As a result, the slavery-reparations movement now enjoys the formal support of 48 members of Congress, including nearly every member of the Congressional Black Caucus, and the NAACP, where a spokesman calls Conyers's bill "a legislative priority." The city councils of Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, Cleveland, and Washington have passed resolutions urging Congress to compensate the descendants of slaves, and Jesse Jackson urges payments from insurance companies tied to the slave trade. This February Harvard's Charles Ogletree and Henry Louis Gates Jr. said they were considering a class-action lawsuit to win reparations (*Harper's* magazine reports that Ogletree has been in contact with Johnnie Cochran's law firm). Indeed, reparations have become so prominent an idea in black America that NAACP officials report a rash of scams around the country in which blacks are told they are already eligible for reparations and asked to pay a fee to process the phony claim.

Two books published this year are also gaining widespread attention in black political circles. Conyers himself cites *The Guilt of Nations*, by Claremont Graduate University Professor Elazar Barkan, who says reparations are part of an "evolving international norm of group and individual rights." More widely influential is *The Debt: What America Owes to Blacks*, by the prominent foreign policy lobbyist Randall Robinson, a hero of the U.S. anti-apartheid movement. Robinson's book—which calls for massive federal reparations on the grounds that "No race, no ethnic or religious group, has suffered so much over so long a span as blacks have, and do still, at the hands of those who benefited, with the connivance of the United States government, from slavery and the century of legalized American racial hostility that followed it"—has garnered effusive praise on the left. Writing in *The Atlantic Monthly*, Jack Beatty notes that "Randall Robinson's eloquent book—*The Fire Next Time*, perhaps, for this generation—could help to turn a mood into a movement." *The Nation* calls Robinson "a worthy heir to W. E. B. Du Bois." Black media outlets like *Emerge* and *Essence* magazines have similarly applauded the book, and Robinson says it has been the number-one best-seller in bookstores catering to blacks.

As black and left-wing elites have embraced reparations, they have downplayed some of the loonier numbers produced by their more radical colleagues (for instance, N'COBRA's figure of $8 trillion). "People seem to me to be moving away from the position of financial remuneration," Conyers says. "People are thinking of more permanent things that can be done: education, health care, job opportunities, housing—things that are less tangible but in the long run might really help make us whole." Robinson suggests a trust fund that would pay for the education and economic development of black America. Massachusetts Representative Barney Frank, the Judiciary Committee's number-two Democrat, adds that money may not be involved at all: "I think the role of hearings ... would be quite frankly to generate support for appropriate affirmative action." Or, as Barkan writes: Through reparations "the identity of the victims is validated and given a political boost."

But even if the reparations movement shifts away from the idea of federal checks and simply tries to use slavery as a more fundamental and compelling justification for vastly expanded affirmative action, its supporters miss a basic political reality. Part of the reason for America's current racial calm is precisely that affirmative action has been scaled back—often replaced by race-neutral programs such as those that admit the top ten percent of high school seniors regardless of race. For many white Americans, 30 years of affirmative action *was* reparations for slavery, and they now feel preferences should be gradually scaled back.

When asked about reparations in his primary-season debate with Bill Bradley in Harlem, Al Gore said as much, pointing to affirmative action and his plans for education spending as compensation enough. And more conservative whites will likely see a serious push for broad reparations as the kind of kooky identity politics that chased them away from the Democratic Party in the 1980s. One hostile posting on the N'COBRA website reads: "You should pay reparations to the ancesters [*sic*] of union troops who died to secure your freedom. My great grandfather being one of them. So send me your checks today." Even Democratic Representative

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Tony Hall of Ohio, who has been pushing for a formal congressional apology for slavery, notes that some members who privately support some kind of reparations "are a little bit afraid of it and don't want to deal with it right now.... The country hasn't moved far enough toward the issue to bring this up right now."

But if Democrats win the seven seats they need to regain the congressional majority—and pollsters increasingly believe they will—Judiciary Committee Chairman Conyers and his allies will bring it up nonetheless. At last month's forum, Representative Carrie Meek recalled how she used to plead with the last Democratic chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Texas Representative Jack Brooks, to hold hearings on the subject. "I begged him to do something about reparations," Meek said. "But guess what? He isn't here anymore. Look who's in his seat." In the coming years, a more polarized America may be looking as well. ■

Campaign Journal

Energy Crisis

By MICHELLE COTTLE

PORTLAND, OREGON

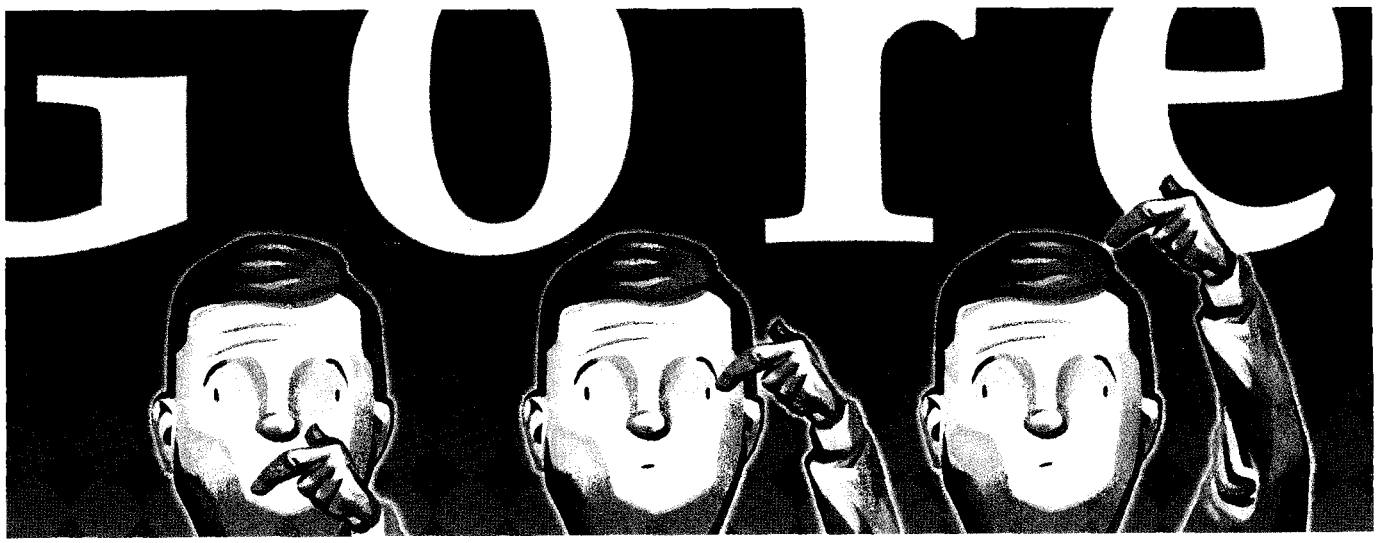
THE WOMAN IS lying facedown in the dirt, handcuffed and spastic, as two Secret Service agents kneel beside her murmuring soothing words. It's probably for the best. Just moments ago, the gal was perilously close to being squashed by several union toughs who resented her efforts to disrupt Al Gore's picture-perfect rally here at Portland State University. Standing directly behind the media pen, she had been blowing an earsplitting whistle, shrieking about Gore's role in the obliteration of the U'wa tribe, and generally carrying on like a deranged five-year-old. Then, when the wall of union muscle threatened to block her view of the vice president, the shrieker somehow flipped herself over the metal barricades and into the press section, where several members of the media—and a fair portion of the surrounding public—watched her make such a spectacle of herself that the Secret Service finally had to assist her into her present position. "This is the face of democracy!" the woman raves, drawing stares as she writhes. Meanwhile, up on stage, a revved-up Gore plows through his stump speech undeterred. If he realizes something is amiss in the audience (which he almost certainly must), he doesn't let on. Eventually the crowd's attention returns to the veep. But one reporter grimaces, "Boy, that really took the air out of the place, didn't it?"

Not really. In fact, the shackled hysteric doesn't strike me as out of place at all; she could be the mascot for a Gore campaign defined, in these final days, by a near mania. Although the veep got a post-final-debate bump in the polls, the race against George W. Bush is still maddeningly close, and the Gore campaign has responded the way it always does when confronted with adversity: by literally working itself into a tizzy.

Today's frenzy began with a 5:15 a.m. baggage call in Philadelphia and ended—after 1,700 miles and appearances in Dallas and Albuquerque—around 10 p.m. (West Coast time, mind you) in Portland. Tomorrow, Gore will do events and interviews in Spokane and Everett, Washington, before heading over to Little Rock, Arkansas. The next day he'll jump from Little Rock to Shreveport, Louisiana, and then up to Nashville. And on and on toward November 7.

Such a grueling schedule takes its toll. Nathan Naylor, the campaign's press shepherd, managed to throw out his back in Oregon. But there's no time for sickness or injury; the next morning Naylor, armed with muscle relaxants, is out troubleshooting at the airport rally in Everett. And while George W. gives himself and his crew a weekly travel reprieve, spending weekends at home in Texas, the Gore camp views such downtime as a failure of character—further proof that W., as Gore has begun charging, is attempting to "hold the ball and run out the clock." In an extraordinary act of spin, press secretary Chris Lehane even denies that members of Gore's entourage are wearing down under the relentless pace: "Are they?" he grins wildly. "I feel great!"

Why the manic energy? Because things haven't gone as



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well over the past month as the veep's camp had expected, and when campaigns are nervous they tend to revert to their natural state—which in Team Gore's case is not fun or charm or vitriol but raw, unadulterated work. Gore folks admit they "just don't know" why their guy didn't, say, get a bigger boost after the last debate. And despite all the bravado—and the real possibility that the vice president may ultimately carry the day—some staffers seem discomfited by their inability to grasp what is happening among the electorate.

The campaign's traveling press corps is equally confounded. "I feel totally out of sync with what's going on," laments one daily reporter, perplexed at the tightness of the race. Rarely has the chattering class felt so out of touch with the heartbeat of America. This, in turn, has produced some harsh sniping, as frustrated reporters act as armchair quarterbacks for a campaign they believe should be winning handily and therefore must be doing something terribly wrong: "Why are they wasting a whole day on Reinventing Government?" "Why aren't they attacking Bush's claims to be a reformer?" "What are they *thinking* with that speech?" In public, self-doubt has reduced reporters and pundits to serial hedgers. In St. Louis, for instance, most journalists insisted privately that Gore overwhelmingly won the third debate. But they thought the same thing after the first one, and, when the polls trended Bush, they got burned. So this time their stories stuck to the safe, tedious conventional wisdom: "Bush wins on personality, Gore on issues."

Gore supporters deal with their bafflement a bit differently: They lash out at the press. As journalists were escorted in and out of the Portland rally, an agitated Gore fan chastised us, "Hey, press! He doesn't lie, and he doesn't exaggerate!" Similar resentment can be heard at nearly every event. "I thought he won [the third debate] big, but then you see the spinmasters afterward...," says Farris Bryson, part of the crowd at the rally in Everett. And such negative spin, gripes Bryson, "affects the polls." The Gore coverage has been totally unfair, agrees Aine Dedannan, also at the Everett event. During the third debate in particular, everyone saw "the Al Gore we know," she asserts. "But then CNN and Fox News and all the cable stations were just tearing apart Gore."

But the frustration and confusion are perhaps most evident in the candidate himself. There is a definite edge to the vice president's campaign appearances these days. Even those that start slow end with Gore sweating and practically screaming at the crowd. Although the wonky vice president still can't resist larding his speeches with policy details, now, mixed in with the wonkery, are his almost painful attempts to add that human touch. "This election comes down to what's in your heart," he frequently pleads, his voice rough with intensity. "I want to ask you to open your hearts and allow yourselves to believe that we can do the right thing in America." In return, Gore pledges, "I will work my heart out" and "I will give it my all." Reprising a popular line from his convention speech, Gore admits at almost every stop that he "won't always be the most exciting politician." But, he screams in closing, "I want to fight for you! I want to fight for your family! I will never give up, and I will never let you down!"

Some people say this is fake, that the real Al Gore doesn't do public displays of emotion, just as he doesn't do public displays of affection. But the emotion isn't really the point; it's the work behind the emotion. That's the real heart of this campaign—a campaign that knows all too well it isn't terribly cool or sexy or inspiring but hopes that in its ceaseless effort to project those qualities voters will see not fraud or duplicity but sheer determination, the kind of determination you want in a president. At Portland State, the crowd isn't cheering wildly and Gore isn't eloquent, but, 20 hours after he started this morning, he's still at it. And tomorrow the vice president will get up just a little earlier and talk just a little louder. And if W. gets up a little later and takes it just a little easier, maybe this mystifying, frightening election will finally turn out OK. ■

Sam and Cokie, this weak.

Yuck, Yuck

By Jonathan Cohn

Is the phrase "Dingell-Norwood" as intrinsically funny as, say, "Buttafuoco"? Sam Donaldson and Cokie Roberts seem to think so. On ABC's "This Week," the pair yukked it up over Al Gore's charge in the final presidential debate that George W. Bush doesn't support the "Dingell-Norwood bill." Dingell-Norwood is an HMO-reform bill currently before Congress, and Gore's reference to it by its proper name struck ABC's Sunday-morning twosome as hysterical. "We thought, as a public service," Sam gleefully intoned, "we'd just show you who Dingell and Norwood are." Then he launched into a highly sarcastic biographical briefing, telling us everything we could ever want to know about Michigan Representative John Dingell and Georgia Representative Charlie Norwood. Dingell's father, Sam noted, was also a congressman. Norwood, it turns out, served in Vietnam.

Incredibly, though, Sam managed to say all this without providing any information about the one thing that actually matters—what the Dingell-Norwood bill says. Fellow panelist George Stephanopoulos gallantly tried to address that issue, but Cokie cut him off:

> Roberts: Actually, I don't think that is the important point there.
>
> Stephanopoulos: Why not?
>
> Roberts: Because that's not what comes across when you're watching the debate. What comes across when you're watching the debate is this guy from Washington doing Washington-speak.

These people are insane. And they're not alone. Gore was also mocked on Fox News Sunday, CNN's "Capital Gang," "The McLaughlin Group," and a half-dozen other shows. The pundits' point, of course, was to remind voters what a

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lousy campaigner Gore is. But the real value of the Dingell-Norwood episode was to remind us how pathetically the press—particularly the Sunday talk-show crowd—has botched coverage of this campaign.

To begin with, the premise of the Dingell-Norwood jokes—that voters don't care about the specifics of issues—isn't entirely correct. In 1992, certainly, voters didn't always grasp the exact details of what the candidates were proposing. But polls then showed they appreciated the specificity; in fact, it was one reason they took to Bill Clinton, who was famous for trotting out acronyms and policy jargon, as opposed to President Bush, who seemed indifferent to domestic policy.

But, for the sake of argument, let's concede the pundits' point. So what? Surely *some* of the time spent laughing over the fact that voters didn't understand Gore's point about Dingell-Norwood could have been spent telling voters what the message was supposed to be—and why it matters.

The pundits could have noted, for starters, that Dingell-Norwood is not just any old piece of HMO legislation. It is by far the strongest of the proposals before Congress—one that allows patients to sue HMOs. Just moments before Gore's question, Bush had pledged support for a "national patients' bill of rights" and boasted that he wanted to give patients the right to sue insurance companies. Yet Bush actually opposed such measures in Texas. Gore's question raised—or should have raised—the following questions from the commentariat: Has Bush changed his position on HMO protection? Or is he misleading people about what he really thinks?

And, speaking of misleading, Bush had trotted out one of his favorite tropes—that, unlike the vice president, he could bring "a different kind of leadership" to the issue and "put partisanship aside." But Dingell-Norwood is a *bipartisan* bill. Its chief proponent (Norwood) is a Republican. The measure actually passed the House, where Republicans hold a majority. The reason it's not law is that the Republican leadership has bottled it up in conference committee. A true bipartisan would do what Gore has done but Bush won't: embrace this bill and call upon Republican leaders to release it.

NONE OF THIS appears to have occurred to Sam and Cokie, whose brief exchange offered a case study in how the media has debased this year's election. Not only was it a classic example of horse-race speculation crowding out substance, it also demonstrated how unwilling the pundits are to make pronouncements on matters of policy—either out of sheer laziness or inability to grasp the most basic facts of lawmaking—even as they feel completely free to engage in witless banter about the candidates' personalities and backgrounds. It showed, once again, how pundits acknowledge only candidate flaws that play to stereotypes—in this case, Gore's stiffness as a campaigner. And, of course, it revealed the extent to which pundits tailor their pronouncements to the whims of public opinion, reasoning backward after first reading the polls. It's no coincidence that the Dingell-Norwood jokes reached their crescendo on the same day the first post-debate polls showed Bush widening his lead over Gore.

Luckily, there's one media heavyweight willing to give this campaign the serious coverage it deserves: David Letterman, the man who made "Buttafuoco" a gag word. Two days after the debate, Bush visited CBS's "Late Show" and was grilled by Letterman about his record on the environment and capital punishment. It was a departure from Dave's normal shtick, and it didn't make for a terribly entertaining show. But, then, who needs late-night comedians when Sam and Cokie are around? ■

Would W.'s Israel policy be as bad as his father's?

Reorient

By LAWRENCE F. KAPLAN *and* SARAH WILDMAN

"I HOPE TO get a sense of, should I be fortunate enough to be the president, how my administration will react in the Middle East," George W. Bush volunteered during the second debate. He's not the only one. Pro-Israel groups are curious as well. They cite two reasons for concern: the enthusiasm of the Arab-American community, which is shaping up as crucial to Bush's electoral strategy; and W.'s advisers, some of whom seem to view America's long-standing commitment to Israel as less an asset than a nuisance.

Bush has been quietly courting the Arab-American vote for weeks, playing on the frayed nerves of a community anxious about Joseph Lieberman's vice presidential candidacy and enraged by events in Israel. Arab-American voters in Michigan, approximately 4 percent of the electorate, could tip the all-important state to Bush—as many believe they did for Republican Governor John Engler in 1990—and, as such, are fast supplanting Cuban-Americans as the GOP's favorite ethnic constituency. Nor does Bush have anything to lose by courting them. With Lieberman on the Democratic ticket, he wasn't going to get the Jewish vote anyway.

The love affair began in September, at the Arab American Political Action Committee's "candidates' night," to which the Bush campaign dispatched Poppy's White House chief of staff, John Sununu. Sununu whipped himself into a frenzy, declaring, "[Bush] is the man that can deal with the issues we care about. I have to tell you, as one whose family still has property in Jerusalem that belongs to us [Sununu is of Palestinian descent], I guarantee you there is a difference between George Bush as president and Vice President Gore. I'm worried not only about the right of return, but I want to return with rights to get my property back." A week later the campaign sent Condoleezza Rice, the Texas governor's top foreign policy aide, to Michigan to meet with Arab-American leaders. The day after that, Bush showed up himself.

He didn't come to talk about prescription drugs. According to Neil Abunab, an AAPAC committee member, Bush pledged that "he would be more evenhanded" in the Middle East. "[W]e have an open channel to basically educate the administration on how to protect America's interests in the

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[Middle East]," says Azzam Elder, an AAPAC board member who attended the briefings. "In the past the administration has been surrounded by those that are pro-Israeli.... We believe [from the meeting] that under a Bush administration it will no longer be the case." Osama Siblani, publisher of the *Arab American News*, had much the same reaction: "We need someone who has not committed in his soul to the state of Israel"—someone like Bush, "who's flexible on Middle Eastern issues."

And, in a video presentation to Arab-American leaders that was ostensibly devoted to racial profiling and the use of secret evidence in counterterrorism cases, Bush criticized President Clinton's use of sanctions (implicitly referring to those against Iraq) and complained, "The present administration has pursued policies that, in practice, have adversely affected your community. My administration will act with fairness more often." The Bush campaign held several off-the-record conversations with Arab-American leaders, and his condemnation of racial profiling and secret evidence six days later in the second debate proved the candidate had been listening. In the weeks since, several major Arab-American organizations have endorsed him—including AAPAC and the Arab American and Chaldean Leadership Council (an umbrella organization representing 20 Michigan groups).

AND IF DOMESTIC politics could tilt a Bush presidency away from Israel, so might elements of W.'s foreign policy team. Bush's Middle East pronouncements have been all over the map. On the one hand, he's promised that "America will not interfere in Israeli elections"—a pointed repudiation of his father's and Clinton's hostility to Likud. And, like many presidential contenders before him, he's pledged to move the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. On the other, he's said moving the embassy "might screw up the peace process," and he sparked a mini-riot in May after he promised, at an American Israel Public Affairs Committee conference, to relocate the "ambassador" to Jerusalem but forgot to say he'd send the embassy with him.

The fact is, neither Bush nor anyone else seems to know what his policy toward Israel will look like. W.'s camp is deeply divided between former Reagan administration officials, who actively support Israel, and former Bush administration officials, whose attitudes toward the Jewish state are cool at best. And, as the jockeying for jobs in a W. administration enters its final stretch, there is mounting evidence that Poppy's circle is gaining the upper hand.

The divisions on the Middle East flow from a broader philosophical dispute. The Reaganites among W.'s advisers, such as Richard Perle and Paul Wolfowitz, take the neoconservative view that America has an obligation to stand by its fellow democracies, not least Israel. Bush père, by contrast, believed America's primary interest in the Middle East was oil. And, not coincidentally, he was more hostile to the Jewish state than any other president in recent memory. Angered by pressure from pro-Israel groups, President Bush famously complained that he was "one lonely little guy" under siege from "powerful political forces." Secretary of State James Baker advertised the telephone number for the White House switchboard and publicly admonished Israel to call "when you're serious about peace." (Behind closed doors, he reportedly blurted, "Fuck the Jews.")

Former Bush père counselors like Brent Scowcroft, Dick Cheney, Rice, and Richard Haass, not surprisingly, see W.'s foreign policy agenda as Bush II. Indeed, all are devotees of realpolitik who view the United States as a country with no special mission other than to safeguard its material interests. "One has to understand [the latter camp's] view of Israel as a subset of their larger worldview, which doesn't understand that power comes from ideas," says David Wurmser, a Middle East expert close to the Reaganites. On Israel, adds a senior Bush adviser, "There will be a struggle [between the two groups] for Bush's soul after the election."

Cheney's record is particularly unnerving. By helping destroy Saddam Hussein's war machine, of course, Cheney greatly enhanced Israel's security. But, judging from the rest of his record, there is little evidence that this was one of his primary goals. As early as 1982, he argued that resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict "must include the formation of a Palestinian state." After the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, Cheney criticized the Reagan administration for not having been "tougher on Israel." He has also vowed to "argue as persuasively as I know how" for a "more balanced policy" in the Middle East, opposed relocation of the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem, and voted for the controversial sale of AWACS planes to Saudi Arabia in the 1980s. More recently, as an oil executive, Cheney lambasted the influence of "domestic constituencies" on U.S. foreign policy, and, as Bush's running mate, he has championed a softer American stance toward Iran, adding that he would seek to persuade Bush of the position's wisdom.

THEN THERE IS Scowcroft, who can barely conceal his animus toward Israel, blaming it for "trashing the Oslo accords" and scoring Clinton for the "double standard" he applies to the Jewish state. Scowcroft, Poppy's national security adviser, may not take a job in a W. administration, but he is Team Bush's behind-the-scenes éminence grise. And he speaks daily with Rice, his protégé from the Bush White House, who, like W., has no independent record on Middle East issues.

According to campaign sources, if Rice, W.'s likely national security adviser, doesn't turn to Scowcroft for counsel on Arab-Israeli issues, she may turn to her colleague and fellow Scowcroft protégé Richard Haass. Haass, the closest thing Scowcroft has to a Mini-Me, directed Middle East policy on the Bush National Security Council, where he helped devise the strategy of using loan guarantees to pressure Israel. Though Haass's rhetoric has mellowed in recent years, he has blamed Israel for inciting Palestinian violence and criticized the Clinton administration for not taking a tougher line toward the Jewish state. Haass argues that making the peace process work will require "a willingness to say and do things that will not always be welcome by strong domestic constituencies." Haass isn't an official member of W.'s inner circle, but he has been advising the campaign and has traveled to Austin to brief the candidate. Sources close to the cam-

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paign predict a Bush administration would offer Haass a plum spot. "If he gets in," says one, "the game's up."

But the game may already be up. Bush's trajectory on the Middle East—in the space of a year, he's gone from suggesting he would be more supportive than Clinton of Israel to saying the United States should be more attuned to Arab views—has closely tracked the declining fortunes of his most vocal pro-Israel advisers. After Perle expressed doubts about the Camp David summit, the Bush campaign publicly repudiated his comments, and his star has since dimmed. Wolfowitz, too, once mentioned as a possible defense secretary, is reportedly headed to the CIA in the event of a Bush victory, where he would have little role in devising policy.

If he wins, Bush's Middle East policy could still turn out differently from Poppy's. But, given the advisers he's inherited from his dad and the debt he may soon owe to the Jewish state's detractors, the more plausible outcome might be the one many Israel supporters anticipate: Like father, like son. ■

Orlando Dispatch

Central

By Ryan Lizza

Florida, the largest state seriously in contention this election year, is home to some of the most pandered-to constituencies in the country. Take Joe Lieberman's visit to Miami last Monday. In a single day, the vice presidential candidate paid homage to no fewer than four key voting blocs. He reached out to Cuban-Americans by visiting the grave of exile leader Jorge Mas Canosa. He paid his respects to Haitians by holding an off-the-record meeting with community leaders. He dazzled Jewish voters at a Dade County community center. And he finished up with a rally at a black college. "He's the only guy who can do all four in one day," boasted Lieberman campaign manager Tim Nides.

Conventional wisdom holds that Democratic pandering and Republican pandering are canceling each other out in Florida. While Dems can count on strong showings from blacks, Jews, and the more liberal retirees who populate the state's east coast, the GOP will win big among Dixiecrats in the northern panhandle, Midwestern retirees on the state's west coast, and Cuban-Americans in Miami. That's why for weeks the polls in Florida have shown a dead heat. But Democrats think they have an ace in the hole. They've quietly extended their pandering to include a group most national observers don't even associate with the Sunshine State: central Florida's estimated 350,000 Puerto Ricans, a stealth constituency Democrats hope will tip the balance not only this year but for years to come.

The I-4 corridor, which cuts across central Florida—from Tampa on the west coast to Daytona on the east—is seen by both parties as crucial to winning the state. The region is home to a booming technology industry, and its new-economy independents, according to *The New York Times*, "may be getting more attention these days than any other voters in the country."

But they're not the only ones getting attention: Orlando, smack-dab in the middle of I-4, is ground zero of Florida's burgeoning Puerto Rican vote. Orange County, which includes Orlando, has seen its Hispanic population, mostly Puerto Rican, grow from 65,000 to 150,000 in the last decade. About half the newcomers come from the island itself; the other half hail from places like Chicago and New York (the New York exiles are known as "Nuyoricans"). The trend started in the 1960s, when Walt Disney World began recruiting inexpensive labor from the island. By the '70s, the son of the governor of Puerto Rico had invested in vast tracts of Orlando real estate and was selling the land to Puerto Ricans back home. Even today, billboards in Puerto Rico advertise land for sale in Orlando, and the tourism industry continues to seek out workers from the island. There are now Puerto Rican shops, newspapers, and radio stations in Orlando, and in 1999 a defense attorney named Tony Suarez became the first Puerto Rican elected to Florida's House of Representatives.

Suarez was catapulted into politics in 1996 when, furious about a series of articles in *The Orlando Sentinel* that blamed Puerto Ricans for the drug trade in central Florida, he mobilized thousands of Puerto Ricans to demonstrate in front of the newspaper's offices. Suarez turned the protest into a nonprofit organization called Latinos en Acción, which ultimately helped carry him to office last year. "When I got elected," he says, "it was like a shot heard 'round the world. I was the first Puerto Rican elected in the state of Florida—and I was elected in a Republican district." And *The Orlando Sentinel*? It now has a San Juan bureau.

"Everyone talks about the Florida Hispanic population as Cuban Republicans," says Suarez, who envisions the faster-growing Puerto Rican population wresting political and cultural influence in the state from the long-powerful Cubans. "When Cubans open a restaurant, it's called a Cuban restaurant. Puerto Ricans would just call it a Spanish restaurant," he notes. "It gives you the impression that they are pushy. They like to appropriate everything." He jokes about his Cuban colleagues in Tallahassee: "They ask me if I want some Cuban coffee. I say, 'I didn't know they were importing coffee from Cuba!' I say, 'It's Colombian coffee, not Cuban.'"

Suarez, a heavyset man with a mustache and salt-and-pepper hair, is known by other Puerto Rican activists as the "Godfather of the community." He drives a white Mercedes-Benz convertible, writes a column for the local Puerto Rican newspaper, and hosts a radio show that has become an essential stop for candidates courting the Puerto Rican vote. During the primary for the Orlando congressional seat being vacated by Senate candidate Bill McCollum, even the two Republican candidates stopped by the show. "When they talk to Anglos, they talk about abortion and taxes," Suarez says, sitting behind his desk at his law office on the outskirts of Orlando. "They came on my show and discussed Vieques and statehood."

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Candidates higher up on the ballot stop by, too. Suarez pops a cassette into a recorder above his desk, and a pandering, monotone voice fills the room: "I have long advocated that the Navy should relocate [from Vieques] as quickly as possible." It's Al Gore, who spent 20 minutes on Suarez's show two weeks ago. "He spoke Spanish with me," says Suarez. "'*Gánamos.*'" Two weeks before that, Lieberman met with Suarez and other Puerto Rican leaders at an Orlando hotel to discuss turning out the Hispanic vote. And when the Gore campaign was searching for a full-time liaison to Puerto Ricans in central Florida, Suarez hooked them up with Marytza Sanz, a Puerto Rican-born woman who had just finished a contract as the Census Bureau's Hispanic-outreach coordinator.

The strategy Sanz is implementing draws heavily on a Hispanic-outreach plan Suarez drafted earlier this year called "Reaching the Sleeping Giant Vote." It includes the standard components of any get-out-the-vote effort: voter registration, phone banks, an absentee-ballot program, and a targeted media campaign.

But Suarez and Sanz have also added some local twists, which they explain over *arroz con pollo* at the Café Madrid ("See, even here you have to have *Cuban* sandwiches!" Suarez sighs, scanning the menu). In nearby Osceola County, residents can begin voting at the local Board of Elections on the Saturday before the election. So Sanz thought of taking a nationally known Hispanic Democrat on a *parrandón*, or Christmas-caroling trip, to voters' doorsteps that Saturday night. The carolers will start at one voter's home, sing a song, and then move to the next house, picking up new singers—and voters—as they move along, until they eventually end up at the Board of Elections to vote. Suarez wants Robert Menendez, a Cuban Democrat from New Jersey, for the *parrandón*. "They have been trying to push [California Representative Loretta] Sanchez on me," Suarez says, shaking his head. "I said, 'Do not send me Sanchez. I want Bob Menendez.'"

Countering the Bush campaign's Hispanic outreach in the region is also part of the plan. "They are beating us to the punch, particularly on religious Spanish radio," says Suarez. When Democrats found out W. would be beamed in by satellite to address a large Hispanic festival called Calle Orange on the Sunday before Election Day, they responded by renting an airplane that will fly over the crowd with a banner reading GANAMOS CON GORE.

Democrats think that below the national punditocracy's radar screen, Suarez's efforts are already paying off. In late September, for the first time, registered Dems officially surpassed registered Republicans in Orange County by about 600 voters. Democrats point to Insurance Commissioner Bill Nelson's lead over McCollum in Florida's Senate race and the surprising success of Democrat Linda Chapin in the race for McCollum's old Orlando congressional seat as evidence that Puerto Ricans are already having a hidden impact on Florida politics. "I told Lieberman that he can tune in at 7:30 on Election Day to see if they won Orange County," says State Senator Buddy Dyer, the head of Gore's central Florida campaign. "If they won Orange County, they won Florida. And if they won Florida, they won the election." And if that happens, look for Suarez and his white Benz at the inaugural. ■

Why W. won't stop an emerging Democratic majority.

The Spirit of '76

By JOHN B. JUDIS

IT'S THE GREAT puzzle of this year's campaign. In opinion polls, voters support—often by large margins—Democratic approaches to health care, Social Security, education, abortion, and gun control. In response, the presidential and congressional candidates compete on the Democrats' terrain—arguing *how*, not *whether*, the government should regulate HMOs, safeguard Medicare and Social Security, and provide prescription-drug coverage.

And yet the Democrats aren't poised for a big win. Indeed, they may not be poised for any win at all. Al Gore is trailing George W. Bush slightly in some polls, the Democrats have just about abandoned hope of winning back the Senate, and the battle for the House is extremely close. Even if the Democrats do win the presidency and the House, it won't be by margins that reflect their ideological advantage. It's more than a little strange.

Unless you look at this campaign historically, in which case it doesn't look strange at all; it looks like the election of 1976. That year was a blip—a short-term Republican setback smack in the middle of a longer-term Republican realignment. And 2000 may be the same. The Democrats are struggling this year, which means they may not solidify their national majority in 2000. But by 2004 or 2008 they almost certainly will.

Let's begin with 1968. In that year's presidential race, the Democratic coalition that had dominated American politics since 1932 fell apart. Alabama Governor George Wallace, running as an independent, won over white Southern Protestant Democrats and white Northern Catholic Democrats angered by the antiwar and civil rights movements, not to mention the beginnings of the counterculture. Republican Richard Nixon won the White House, but he failed to win a popular majority, and the GOP didn't take Congress. In 1969, a book by Kevin Phillips, *The Emerging Republican Majority*, predicted a realignment based on the combined Nixon-Wallace vote. But that realignment took until 1980. Phillips

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blamed Watergate for the delay, but it wasn't the only reason.

The majority coalitions that have periodically risen to dominate American politics—from the Jacksonians of 1828 to the Democrats of 1932—have not been simply collections of interests; they have been drawn together by an animating worldview. During the 1970s, the GOP, divided between Ford moderates and Reagan conservatives, could not unite traditional business Republicans—who saw the party as the protector of their earnings—with the downscale social conservatives who voted for Wallace in 1968 and became further alienated by gun control, welfare, and *Roe* v. *Wade*. It took Reagan conservatives until decade's end to fashion a unified worldview that combined militant anti-communism with economic and social conservatism.

In the 1970s, Republicans were also hampered by their past. Conservative Democrats who might have voted for the GOP still identified it with Herbert Hoover and the Great Depression—an identification reinforced by the steep recession of 1974–1975. It took the stagflation and recession of the Carter years to convince these Democrats to put aside their fears of Republican economic policy and vote for candidates whose social outlook they supported.

The Reagan majority lasted through the 1980s. But by 1992 it began to come apart—a victim of the cold war's end and the economic downturn, which fed fears of long-term economic decline. When blue-collar Reagan Democrats grew worried about unemployment, they became less inclined to vote primarily on social issues. And when upscale Republicans grew concerned about rising deficits, they became unwilling to overlook the growing strength of the religious right within the party. As these two groups began to abandon the GOP, Republicans suffered in 1992 the same kind of defeat Democrats had suffered in 1968—a defeat that signaled the beginning of a political realignment.

BUT JUST AS the Democratic Party's 1968 loss did not immediately produce a new Republican majority, the GOP's loss in 1992 did not lead directly to a new Democratic one. Clinton, like Nixon, didn't get 50 percent of the vote, winning the presidency in 1992 with a smaller percentage than Michael Dukakis had garnered in 1988. Many Reagan Democrats voted for third-party candidate Ross Perot. Then, in his first years in office, Clinton was hampered by the hubris of victory, believing that the public had endorsed not only the populist priorities of "Putting People First" but also massive new government initiatives.

After the rebuke of the 1994 midterm elections, Clinton adopted a more effective strategy: He restricted himself to incremental reforms while working to identify the Democrats as the party of the new economy and new prosperity. The economic boom that began in 1995 made this much easier. It erased the memory of Carter-era stagflation. It reduced the white working-class fear of blacks and immigrants that had undermined Democratic majorities in the North and in California. And, by creating a government surplus, it made the public amenable for the first time in almost two decades to new Democratic spending. In the 1996 presidential and 1998 congressional elections, the outlines of a new majority emerged, stretching from the Northeast and Middle Atlantic states across the upper Midwest and over to the West Coast. It would include not only the Democratic constituencies of the '30s and the '60s but also the growing group of office workers, managers, and professionals who wanted a socially liberal party that understood the promise of the new economy.

During his second term, Clinton should have consolidated this new majority. But, distracted by scandal and threatened with impeachment, he couldn't. Democrats in Congress tried to develop programs on which their candidates could run, but what they came up with—legislation regulating HMOs and extending prescription-drug coverage under Medicare—was too narrowly targeted to electoral constituencies of female workers and senior citizens. The Democrats entered the 2000 election with a set of popular issues but without an animating worldview capable of inspiring a new majority.

WHILE CLINTON'S SECOND term eerily resembled Nixon's, the Republicans of the 1990s replicated the follies of the Democrats of the 1970s. After November 1994, they believed they had begun a revolution that would let them finish the job Reagan started. They didn't understand that the election was primarily a rebuke to Clinton and that their gains in the South and Southwest were largely the result of finally filling seats that had been occupied by equally conservative Democrats.

Indeed, the November 1994 election turned out to be not the beginning of a new realignment but the end of an old one. After the Republicans failed to enact their agenda in 1995, they ceded the legislative initiative to the Democrats, who focused public attention on the minimum wage and the Kennedy-Kassebaum health care portability bill. (Clinton even managed to claim credit for welfare reform.) Like the Democrats of the 1970s, the GOP became more and more focused on pleasing its constituents and contributors through tax breaks and subsidies and incapable of developing a national program to revive the Republican majority.

Enter George W. Bush. Republican leaders wanted to nominate Bush in 2000 for the same reason many Democrats wanted to nominate Jimmy Carter in 1976. As a successful governor, Bush could distance Republicans from their nationally discredited congressional leadership. Like Carter did that year, Bush spoke about decency and unity but was relatively indifferent to substance. He represented not the renewal but the repudiation of Reagan Republicanism. Bush borrowed the term "compassionate conservative" from right-wing intellectual Marvin Olasky, but where Olasky used it to describe a plan to replace public welfare with private charity, Bush used it merely to make a statement about his own personality. He trumpeted his compassion and, like Carter, promised that as president he would stop "the bickering in Washington, D.C."

During this campaign, Bush has largely operated on Democratic terrain. At the final presidential debate, in St. Louis, a member of the town-hall audience asked Gore about holding HMOs accountable for their decisions. "I support a strong national patients' bill of rights. It is actually a dis-

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agreement between us," Gore answered, referring to Bush. Bush replied, "Actually, Mr. Vice President, it's not true. I do support a national patients' bill of rights. As a matter of fact, I brought Republicans and Democrats together to do just that in the state of Texas, to get a patients' bill of rights through." Bush's reply was disingenuous, but what was important was that he felt he had to pretend to support a Democratic initiative he had tried to defeat. Bush has similarly downplayed his opposition to abortion and gun control. And, while Bush has invoked the Reagan cure-all of tax cuts, he has used them merely as the Republican equivalent of pork-barrel politics, not, as Reagan did, as a magic elixir to revive the economy.

Republican Senate and House candidates have been even more brazen in abandoning Reagan Republicanism. Perhaps the most illuminating example has been Missouri Senator John Ashcroft, who, until Democratic challenger Mel Carnahan's tragic death this month, was locked in a close reelection campaign. Ashcroft, once rated one of the six most conservative senators by *National Journal*, had taken the lead in promoting a constitutional amendment banning abortion (even in cases of incest and rape) and in fighting Democratic proposals for prescription-drug coverage and a patients' bill of rights. But, in this year's race, Ashcroft has been astonishingly evasive on abortion and has presented himself as the people's defender against the rapacious drug companies and HMOs. "John Ashcroft stood up to the drug companies to lower drug prices," one of his campaign commercials claims. In early October, Ashcroft even endorsed the Democratic version of the patients' bill of rights. Pennsylvania's Rick Santorum, Delaware's William Roth, and other embattled Republican Senate hopefuls have also moved frantically to the center to head off Democratic challenges.

So, if the Republicans are fighting on their turf, why aren't the Democrats winning big? One reason is that, just like the Republicans of the 1970s, this year's Democrats are still hurt by their past associations. Although Clinton did much to remove the stigma of '60s permissiveness, many white working-class males who used to vote Democratic favor Bush and the Republicans this year, since they still associate the Democrats with high crime rates, rising welfare rolls, undue favoritism to minorities, and hostility to the military. Gore understands this. That's why, during the debates, he wouldn't venture even the mildest criticism of the unconscionable execution spree Bush has overseen in Texas.

Another problem for Democrats is that their new majority is split. In 1976, Ford's and Reagan's presidential candidacies demonstrated the potential breadth of the new Republican majority. But in that election many Reagan supporters, particularly in the South, either didn't vote or voted for Carter, who had personal appeal as a born-again Christian. This year, Democrats face a similar challenge on their left from Ralph Nader, whose candidacy is further testimony to the potential breadth, and current division, of a Democratic majority. In the upper Midwest and Northwest, Nader could hurt Gore's chances as much as Reagan hurt Ford's in the South.

Gore also has a "Clinton problem" similar to the "Nixon problem" Ford faced in 1976. While Ford tried to put Nixon behind him, Gore has tried to identify himself with the Clinton administration's positive achievements without being tarred by its scandals. And he has not succeeded any more than Ford did. By avoiding any topic that touches on Clinton, Gore has stilled talk of Monica Lewinsky and White House coffees, but he has failed to capitalize on the administration's success in managing the economy and saving popular programs from Newt Gingrich and Tom DeLay.

Finally, Gore and the Democrats have suffered from Clinton's inability during his second term to transform his successful 1996 campaign strategy into a new majority politics. But here Gore shares some of the blame. In early 1999, when he was beginning his presidential run, Gore attempted to develop a politics around "quality of life" issues. But, faced with a challenge from Bill Bradley, he became a populist fighter for the poor and middle class—a stance he carried over to the election against Bush. Granted, there are some advantages to Gore's populism: It may help with blue-collar Reagan Democrats, and it should boost turnout among Democratic core voters. But reiterating long-standing Democratic promises to fight the "interests" hasn't captured the imagination of today's voters, and it has allowed Bush to paint Gore as backward-looking. As Clinton showed in 1996, Democrats have to combine the old populist themes with the promise that they can manage the new economy better than their rivals. Gore is intellectually well-equipped to make this argument, but he and his campaign have failed to do so.

Of course, this isn't the failing most pundits focus on. Instead, they blame Gore's—and, by extension, the Democrats'—difficulties largely on the vice president's personality. Aubrey Immelman, a political psychologist at the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University, has even developed a theory of political personality to explain the election, predicting that the "outgoing, gregarious Bush" will "post a double-digit victory" over the "conscientious, introverted Gore." But Gore's personal deficiencies aren't the story. Both Bush and Gore have personal disabilities as candidates. If Gore is seen as aloof, pompous, and overbearing, Bush is viewed as shallow, dim-witted, and immature. What voters say about a candidate's behavior and personality often reflects their feelings about what he or she stands for. One voter's "overbearing" is another's "forceful."

To blame Gore personally for the Democrats' difficulties this year is to misunderstand how political realignments work. Much more important is that the Democrats of 2000, like the Republicans of 1976, entered this year's election with some programs but without a compelling politics able to unite a new majority. Even if they ultimately win, the Democrats will have paid a steep price for Clinton's rocky second term. In addition, the Democrats of today, like the Republicans of the '70s, are suffering from the natural lag between partisan change and voter perceptions. To take the final step toward a new majority, today's Democrats may need the opposition to demonstrate one final time that it is ideologically out of step with the country. Beginning in January 2001, they may get their chance. ■

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Stanley Kauffmann on Films

The Same, Only Different

THE WORLD—a bit of it, anyway—has been waiting for Stephen Daldry's first film. This English director has acquired a large reputation in the theater, so large that there has already been a book about him though he is only forty. In the early 1990s, he was made head of the Royal Court Theater in London, and a couple of years ago he signed a three-year film contract. Apparently, as reported, this was not a change of venue but an extension of enterprise; he intended to become ambidextrous, a theater-film director.

Some feared that he might be leaving the theater completely. My breath was less bated. I thought his move less of a possible theater loss than others did because I had seen two of his productions and could not share the enthusiasm of most London and New York theater critics. The two that I saw were Sophie Treadwell's *Machinal* (in London) and J. B. Priestley's *An Inspector Calls* (in New York), mediocre plays both, and Daldry seemed to have chosen them precisely for their mediocrity. Apparently he wanted to elevate lesser works with directorial "concepts," to prove that conceptualization could flourish at levels below the classics (already flooded with concepts); and he embellished both of those plays with scenic emphases and additions. But those productions reminded me of the donkeys that one sees abroad, loaded with burdens larger than themselves.

Now Daldry's first feature arrives, **Billy Elliott** (Tiger Aspect), and, astonishingly, it is built on the very same principle as those two Daldry theater works. He has chosen a banal story and has lavished directorial ingenuity on it. But there is one important difference: most of his cinematic flourishes here are integrated and helpful, not egregious distentions. *Billy Elliott* is (as far as I have seen his work) the *summa* of the Daldry method so far, because film can ingest his inventiveness more organically than the theater.

The story of the picture, written by Lee Hall, is very likable. How could it not be? It has been likable for the whole century of film's existence. A youngster from a poor family has a talent, and against all obstructions, including some from his own family, wins through to success—and wins the belated pride of his family. Through the decades, the shape of the story has remained the same from picture to picture; only the protagonist's talent varies. It has been boxing (recently a girl fighter), music, acting, and more, but always there is a closing triumph, emotionally overflowing. To this ancient scheme of talent as upward mobility, Daldry has applied his own talent.

The place is a coal-mining town in County Durham, in the northeast of England; the time is 1984, when the great miners' strike is on. Billy is a miner's son, but he has only limited interest in the strike. He is mad for dancing. In the opening shot we see him putting on a phonograph record, then leaping up and down, in slow motion, against flowery wallpaper—Daldry's first evocative touch. Billy then fixes breakfast for his grandmother in a way that shows he always does it and takes it to her, but she is not there. Slightly loopy, she is wandering in the field outside. Billy gently brings her back. Thus, before the film is three minutes along, Billy's character is outlined: dancing, daily routine, family, tenderness.

Billy's father sends him for boxing lessons in the town's recreational center, but he is no good at it. One day, another group comes in to share the large room—young girls in tutus and ballet slippers with their teacher, the tough but knowledgeable Mrs. Wilkinson, who chain-smokes even during class. The die is immediately cast: Billy is more taken with ballet than with boxing, and Mrs.Wilkinson, struck by his interest, lets him join the class.

For a while he attends without his father's knowledge. When Dad finds out, he explodes, not least because of his fear that Billy will become a "pouf," as he calls it. The screenplay handles this matter by giving Billy a coeval friend who is gay and cannot interest Billy in this way. (The filmmakers apparently felt they couldn't fight two battles at once: freedom of talent and freedom of sexuality. Gayness is treated as a risk that Billy doesn't run.)

From here on, the screenplay takes an absolutely predictable course, with Dad being won over by Billy's outburst of dancing, not in the ballet class but in the grimy streets. When Mrs. Wilkinson arranges an audition for Billy at the Royal Ballet School in London, Dad even tries to join the scab strikebreakers to earn the money for the trip; but he is wrestled to the ground—understandingly, one might say—by his miner son, Billy's elder brother. Instead, Dad pawns his dead wife's watch and necklace and takes Billy to London. Billy is admitted to the school, leaves home, and we wait for the inevitable finish.

Daldry holds us through all this worn story because he treats it as if it were optimum material. In scene after scene he tries to enliven the familiar, not always freshening it. Here are some of his better touches. A girl of about five is standing outside Billy's gate when he first comes out; she is there when Mrs. Wilkinson calls; she is there when Billy leaves for London. It's a little like Josef von Sternberg, a suggestion of the environment's fixity while the protagonist changes. When Billy is on his way to school one day, he has to go through a field of policemen practicing subjugation of offenders, policemen who may be used against his father and brother and their chums. When Billy's bus leaves for London, it slides past us from right to left and deftly transmutes into a London Underground train years later, bringing the father and the brother to Covent Garden for Billy's performance.

Two scenes are truly subtle and lovely. After Billy's audition at the ballet school, he waits painfully for the letter with the school's verdict. It arrives. He takes it into his room, opens it, reads it, crumples it next to him and sits, almost tearfully, with a cushion on his chest. His family can't wait for him to come out with the news. They burst in, and Billy says quietly: "I'm in." Later, on his way to the London bus, to a changed future, he stops to say goodbye to the person chiefly responsible for it, Mrs. Wilkinson. He waits on a bench outside the gym while he hears her inside, teaching her dancers. She comes out, smoking. He says, "I'll miss you." She says, "No, you won't." She tells him that, when you go out into the world to find life, you lose past things. Then she returns to her class, still smoking.

Julie Walters, I am relieved to note, is splendid as Mrs. Wilkinson. In some films, Walters can act so strenuously that she intervenes between the role and the audience. In the recent *Titanic Town*, where she was a belligerent Belfast housewife, I kept wondering which particular annual acting award she was after. Here,

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with a Northumbrian accent instead of Northern Irish, Walters has only Mrs. Wilkinson on her mind—this woman's life of implied disappointment and readjustment, cautiously lightened now by a hope for Billy.

Gary Lewis is the father, stern, stubborn, aware that he has been limited by his life but not therefore ashamed. The only false moment is a close-up of his hands: those are not a manual worker's hands. Jamie Draven, as Billy's older brother, fumes and subsides and obliquely loves Billy, all forcefully.

Billy is Jamie Bell in his acting debut. He is surely a dancing prodigy, at least in the tap dancing that he does through the streets, bouncing off walls and fences as if dancing could be his escape. His acting is less overwhelming. Daldry has evidently worked hard with him in sensible ways, trying to elicit feelings, not to impaste them, but Bell manages to be little more than credible most of the time. His best moment comes at the Royal Ballet School audition when a woman on the board asks him how he feels when he is dancing. His reply, reluctant but warming, is clearly what wins him admission.

The one strongly objectionable element in the screenplay is the strike. (Glimpses of it are sometimes intercut with the dancing.) There is no shred of intrinsic reason why the film had to take place during that strike: the family's responses to Billy would have been the same in any case. The screenwriter utilized this immense national problem, and Daldry accepted it, simply as padding for what would otherwise have been a slim script.

Daldry's screen career—his theater career is another story—may really flower artistically when he doesn't have to prove that his material is worth his talent. ■

The First Man

By ROGER KAPLAN

Journal, 1955–1962: Reflections on the French-Algerian War by Mouloud Feraoun translated by Mary Ellen Wolf and Claude Fouillade

(University of Nebraska Press, 340 pp., $25)

I.

MOULOUD FERAOUN AND Albert Camus were exact contemporaries. Born in 1913, at the apogee of France's African empire, they lived to see its decline. They grew up in extreme poverty in Algeria, Feraoun in Kabylia, the mountainous Berber region east of Algiers, and Camus a couple of hundred miles away in the port city of Algiers. In Algeria, the collapse of French imperialism happened with a brutality that left deep marks on French and Algerian imaginations. Caught in the middle of a savage war in which their humanistic learning and humane temperaments seemed utterly without consequence, Feraoun and Camus suffered an aching sense of helplessness when they were at the very height of their fame and literary influence. Their stories are melancholy reflections on the limitations of culture and decency when warrior passions are unleashed by politics.

They were scholarship students who became outstanding writers; and today they are among the most widely read French authors of the terrible century just past. Camus was the more precocious, bursting upon the scene in 1941 with *L'Étranger* (*The Stranger*), which was followed by other novels, short stories, theater works, essays, journalism, and a final unfinished novel. Feraoun wrote three novels, all of them in the 1950s, *La Terre et Le Sang* (*Earth and Blood*), *Le Fils du Pauvre* (*The Poor Man's Son*), and *Les Chemins qui Montent* (*The Ascending Paths*), as well as *L'Anniver-*

ROGER KAPLAN is the Washington bureau chief of *African Geopolitics*.

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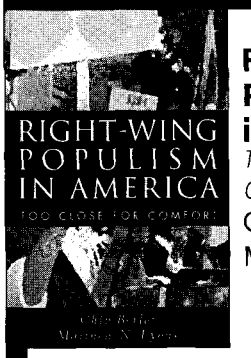

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saire (*The Birthday*), which was posthumously published in 1972. He collected and edited the poetry of Si Mohand, Kabylia's Robert Burns, and wrote a number of critical essays.

The Poor Man's Son, Feraoun's second novel, captures the moment between two ages and two cultures, the boy growing out of childhood, the Kabyle peasant moving into an awareness of the larger world. It defined a generation's view of itself, of its parents, of its people's historical situation. The novel does so entirely without pretense or artifice; it is, after all, only the story of a boy who does well in school and has learned to take a caustic if loving view of his family, which, despite their poverty, or because of it, cannot really understand his worldly success even if they admire it. The book establishes all this with such understated kindness and honesty that it is not difficult to see why *The Poor Man's Son* is widely considered Feraoun's masterpiece. But Feraoun is best known for a chronicle of events, titled simply *Journal*, that he kept during the eight-year war that led to Algerian independence in 1962.

Both men had wanted to be teachers, but only Feraoun succeeded in this ambition. Camus's extraordinary journalism probably should be seen in part as compensation for a pedagogical vocation thwarted by his tubercular condition. Camus made his way in France, but returned often to visit his family and friends in Algiers, and his wife was from Oran, the country's western capital. Feraoun was unhappy in the prestigious École Normale in Algiers (though it was there that he met the man who would be his and Camus's mutual best friend, the writer Emmanuel Robles), and he hurried back to his native ground, where he raised a family and became a community elder.

Respectful of each other's work, attached to their country and their families, the two men, one a democratic leftist and the other a devout Muslim, shared an intense moral sense, a horror of intolerance, and a passion for justice. But they reached different conclusions about the Algerian war in the 1950s, about the very idea of Algeria. For Camus, if Algeria was not French in the way Brittany and Corsica are (for the time being) French, at least its fate was inextricably bound to France's fate, and a political separation was inconceivable. For Feraoun, the premise of the nationalist movement in Algeria was correct: the colonial regime could not be reformed, and it condemned to misery (this Camus readily conceded) the vast majority of the country's people. He did not believe, as did Camus, that the French policy of "republican integration" was still an option, or that its human dimension, "assimilation"—of which Feraoun himself was, in some respects, an example—would ever touch more than a few hundred, at most a few thousand, individuals, whom the French called "*évolués*," or "advanced."

Feraoun and Camus deplored the violence that characterized the long war that the Algerians called their Revolution (and that the French until just last year would not officially acknowledge as a foreign war, though they referred to it almost from the beginning as *la guerre d'Algérie*). In a country of ten million people, a tenth of the population was killed, and another tenth of the population gave up and left, leaving behind a wrecked infrastructure. But where Feraoun, concretely, deplored the brutality of French soldiers (as well as the attacks that the *Front de Libération Nationale* (FLN) directed against civilians, including Muslims), Camus asserted, abstractly, that all men must be brothers. The sentimental rejection of violence usually hides ideological thinking, and this came through in many of Camus's writings on Algeria in the 1950s, even though he had just completed an important book, *L'Homme Révolté* (*The Rebel*), which was nothing if not a criticism of ideology. Indeed, ideological rationalizations for Camus's position crept in constantly, from the notion of a putative Soviet threat to NATO to the idea that the whole revolt was concocted by pan-Arab or pan-Islamic conspirators in Cairo. Still, Camus understood, far better than his detractors on the anti-colonial left in Paris and the pro-colonial right in Algiers, the fratricidal aspects of the conflict.

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Mouloud Feraoun

And Feraoun understood them even better. He rejected violence not from sentiment but from sorrow, and not only because he saw it personally, from very close, destroying his students, several members of his family, his friends. What he grasped was nothing less than the failure of the French colonial enterprise in North Africa; and he measured its failure not in ideological terms but in the most rudimentary human terms. If, after 130 years, the French could not look upon Algerians with other than racist eyes, then there was not much sense in talking about making up for all the lost time, especially as young men with guns were raising the human and political stakes daily, rendering compromise less likely with every shot fired.

There was much that Feraoun disliked about the national movement as led by the FLN—the original "national liberation front" of so many "third world" battles that would follow, though the appellation itself came out of the French Resistance—and its unforgiving leaders. He disliked their summary judgments against putative traitors, and he disliked their treatment of the young women who joined, or were encouraged to join, the guerilla movement. He disliked their authoritarianism, and saw it as the harbinger of a dictatorial regime. All this was his problem, as an Algerian.

His *Journal* makes clear Feraoun's lucidity regarding the national question—an issue that has bedeviled our times and of which Algerian history has been in many ways prototypical. Camus and Robles and other "white liberals" (as Americans might have said) sought an understanding between the communities. In 1956, they organized a "civil truce" move-

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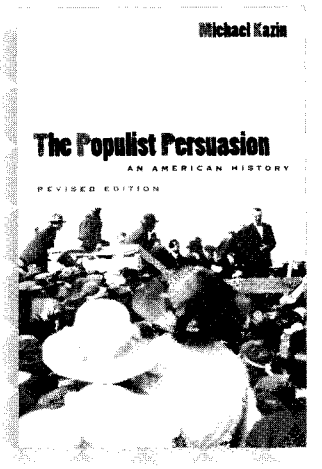
ment to call for an end to attacks (from both sides) on civilians. But it was the *pieds-noirs*, the European settlers, who rejected the noble idea, and very nearly tried to lynch Camus when he presented it at a meeting in Algiers. In the same way, the settlers repeatedly rejected every move toward peace by the government in Paris, preferring instead to demonstrate that they could hold it hostage. Thus Feraoun observed that there was not an Algerian problem, there was a European problem.

> . . . as far as I know, no other Frenchman [he is referring to François Mauriac, who was highly critical of French policy] has dared to say: This people of eight million men is not French, and on its soil the French, who disagree with one another, are battling for the sole purpose of deciding the manner in which they are going to continue to impose their will upon it, to continue to live here, to continue to exploit and despise it, in the name of imperishable principles, in order to fulfill a highly civilizing mission.

But Feraoun was not just a decent man, he was also a wonderful writer, and the extraordinary quality of his writing owed a great deal to his wisdom: he knew himself and he knew his land, and because he knew these things he knew other things as well. He knew, for example, how a hard-working French settler, someone perhaps named Durand or Zeller, from Burgundy or Alsace, or the son of one of the many *communards* who escaped being shot after the failure of the Paris insurrection of 1871 by going to Algeria, felt about the war. Such a man felt quite simply, as Feraoun knew, that he had worked all his life, that this was his land, that he had himself never hurt any Arabs or Kabyles.

Feraoun did not doubt any of this. And who could doubt, he further thought, that the *fellaghas*, the rebels, were utterly contemptuous of such reasoning? Unlike Camus—and unlike Jean Amrouche, a prominent Algerian contemporary who often articulated the FLN position in the French media—Feraoun saw little point in getting indignant. The pages of his journal burn with the shame of watching human beings every day surpassing themselves in cruelty, but he saw little value in anger as a political posture. Even less would he have shared the enthusiasm for liberating violence celebrated by Fanon and Sartre.

Camus was often viewed as a just man, but Feraoun's wisdom was a quality that eluded Camus, though he was evidently reaching for it in the work that went into his last novel. In his writing before that unfinished book, Camus certainly never knew the "Arabs," as he called Muslims



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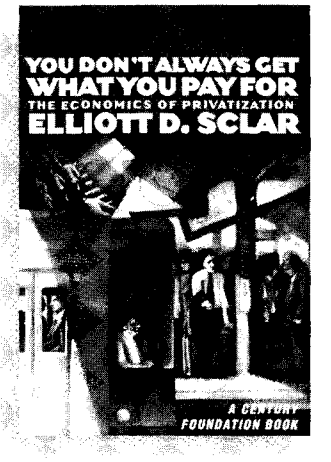

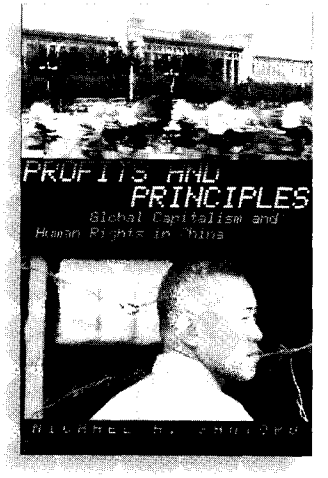

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indiscriminately, even remotely as well as Feraoun knew the French. Out of this wisdom Feraoun drew the sad but lucid conclusion that (as Feraoun would have put it) imposed itself: that the break was inevitable after the first shots were fired, if not earlier.

As a chronicle of what the break meant while it was taking place on the village streets and in the countryside, in the homes of the people most directly affected by its endless cruelty, the journal that Feraoun kept, at the urging of his friend Robles, somewhat irregularly, from 1955 until 1961, is indispensable. It is also entirely without philosophical affectation, a profound and concrete commentary on issues that would arise again in "north-south" crises in the following decades, of which the Algerian revolution was, one might say, the laboratory. After years of anti-colonial and post-colonial theory, Feraoun's journal is truly refreshing to read. In its pages a genuinely free man reflects on relations of power between the conqueror and the conquered, on the place of intellectuals and teachers in a political war, on the effect of repression and resistance on families and neighbors, friends and communities. The simplicity with which Feraoun approached these terrible events was a literary strategy, a literary accomplishment—and proof that that he had a better grasp of the meaning of his country's history than did most commentators in Paris and elsewhere. Keeping his journal, moreover, was an act of courage: people were arrested and killed for less overt expressions of sympathy for the rebellion. Feraoun and his friend Robles—who, unlike Camus, came to accept the argument for independence—hid the school notebooks in which the journal was written in places around their houses and gardens.

II.

CAMUS UNDERSTOOD very well the inequities of the colonial system. He had written on them in his earliest, pre-World War II journalism, and he returned to Algeria in 1945 to write a series of articles, following a catastrophic repression by the French authorities of a nationalist demonstration in the region around Setif, in the east of the country. In Setif the government massacred some 15,000 people, essentially for asking whether the recent victory over Nazi Germany might imply that reforms should be made in Algeria, which was then ruled by a regime in which nine out of ten residents were without civil and political rights. Camus left no doubt that he saw the system as disgusting, racist, and brutal. He acknowledged that most Algerians, after the events in Setif, lost what interest they might have had in the declared policy of assimilation and universal citizenship.

Yet Camus's conclusion was that Algeria must be "reconquered" (his term) through justice: "Only the boundless power of justice must allow us to reconquer Algeria and its population." That word "justice" would return to haunt him. Camus and Feraoun came out of the same rigorous public school system of the Third Republic, and they assimilated the same universalist ideals of freedom and equality; but Camus clung to those ideals eloquently and desperately, while Feraoun viewed them with skepticism.

They both learned to write French with the simplicity and the clarity that characterize that language's best prose: they are the kinds of writers who seem, when you first encounter them, easy to read, and turn out to be far more difficult to understand. They always say much more than you thought they said. This is, of course, one definition of classical literature; and both Camus, who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1957, and Feraoun, who is probably the most widely-read French-language Algerian writer of the century (after Camus), were part of the French canon by the late 1950s.

Camus's reputation was made with his first novel, but in the late 1950s—when, consecrated by the Nobel committee and having done his duty to explain the modern condition in general and the French-Algerian political situation in particular, he could concentrate at last on the story of the French-Algerian community itself—Camus was working on a book very much like Feraoun's *The Poor Man's Son*. Camus's last novel, *The First Man*, was going to do for the *pieds-noirs* of Belcourt what *The Poor Man's Son* had done for the *fellahin* of Kabylia. It is surprising that few critics seem to have noticed the extraordinary similarity between these two autobiographical novels. The reasons no doubt must be found in the reluctance of Algerian critics to deal with Camus, who remained a partisan (a conflicted partisan, but a partisan) of French Algeria, while on the French side the Algerian crisis remains a trauma unconfronted, as the World War II years were until very recently.

Feraoun, the kindest of men, was a blunt writer, who related in plain language the violence that he knew about. "It has been decided that we should all be killed as long as we persist in our desire for independence," he notes at one point. Feraoun gets quite specific:

> The people of Taourirt are often present at the torture sessions that take place at the school. The soldiers cook up all sorts of sophisticated methods to make the Kabyles [Berbers] talk: they make them drink gasoline, they tear off their nails, hang them by their feet, insert objects up their rectums, put straws in their mouths, tie, hit, cut and burn them. But electric shock is the worst. Apparently, everybody heard the agonizing cries of Meziane when he was being tortured this way. It lasted quite a while; then the cries got weaker and, gradually, faded into an anguished murmur. Then the soldiers sent someone to get a bottle of water for him to drink. After that, they killed him.

Tersely and eloquently, Feraoun summed up in the pages of his journal the injustice of the colonial system; but unlike the Paris intellectuals he did not dwell upon it, preferring to keep notes on what actually happened to actual people with whom he was acquainted. "I have just found out about the death of my friend Madene," he writes in January 1957. "He was arrested at home last Saturday and taken to Beni-Doula, where, after questioning, he is rumored to have been executed in an atrocious manner... Nekili told me that his body had been brought back in a sack, so riddled with bullets that his arms and head had been severed." In the midst of this, Camus was complaining, with a certain lack of perspective, that the FLN was engaging in a terrorism more outrageous than had been ever seen in history.

Though they differed about the meaning of the Algerian war, Camus and Feraoun were made for each other. Their irritation with high-minded, prestigious intellectuals such as Sartre and Amrouche, who had grown up in privilege and who took it upon themselves to tell others what was good for them, sprang from the same kind of intellectual and social integrity. *Le Fils du Pauvre*, like the unfinished *Le Premier Homme*, is so powerful because the tenderness that it expresses for the warm community of its hero's childhood is true, and entirely unsentimental.

Inevitably, for these disadvantaged and gifted boys, the stories of their early lives had to center on schools and schoolmasters. For their teachers—severe but affectionate men who wanted them educated and who got them the scholarships that persuaded their parents to let them stay in school rather than put them to work—these boys represented raw human material to be turned into civilized Frenchmen. Like all French boys and girls, they had to take exams to get into the higher levels of the *lycée* that would, in turn, prepare them for the exams leading to the École Normale. When he makes it to the penultimate stage and is sent to an advanced preparatory school in Algiers, the young

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man in Feraoun's novel is addressed by his father, who at the beginning had thought it impossible that a poor boy could attain such a high level.

> "You are going to Algiers," he [the father] said. "There will be many others. Only a few will be chosen—fate will decide. You're going to Algiers, like your mates. Up there, we'll wait for you. If you fail, you'll come home. Remember well that we love you. And your education, eh, no one can take it from you. It's yours. Now I'm going back to the village. Your mother will know I spoke to you. I will say that you are not afraid."
>
> "Yes, tell them I am not afraid."

Camus did not have a father, so in his novel it is his grammar school teacher who sends him off, visiting the poor home to give his illiterate mother and his authoritarian grandmother the good news that he is admitted:

> "Thank you Mr. Bernard, thank you," she said, while Mr. Bernard stroked the child's head. "You no longer need me," he said, "you will have more learned masters. But you know where to find me, come see me if you need help."
>
> He left and Jacques stayed alone, lost among these women, and then he ran to the window to see his master, who was waving to him one last time and now was leaving him alone, and, in the midst of joy and success, a child's enormous pain gripped his heart, as if he knew already that he had, by this success, been taken away from the innocent and warm world of the poor, a world closed on itself like an island in the larger society, but where poverty serves as family and community, and he had been thrown into an unknown world, no longer his own, where he could not believe the masters could be more learned than this one, whose heart knew everything, and henceforth he would have to learn and understand without help, become a man without the help of the only man who had helped him, grow up by himself, at a very high price.

Feraoun knew what was wrong with the French school system. No doubt it brought benefits to those who went through it, and in his journal he ruefully recorded the burning of schools and the harassment of teachers; but he was scarcely unaware of what it meant for a Muslim Berber to be told, as he recalls in a journal entry in 1956, "that France was my adoptive country and that, consequently, I was a little orphan to be looked after. This put in my heart a lot of humility and tender gratitude; and I liked France more than a French child.... [The schoolmaster] talked to me about the emperor with the white beard who killed the Saracens [Charlemagne] and of Jeanne d'Arc, at whom he poked fun because of the voices she heard.... Other [foreign] people of whom he talked seemed ridiculous and unpleasant to us. This included our own ancestors.... We would redeem them by becoming 'good French people.'" But it did not work out that way.

Feraoun's journal became one of the most important books to emerge from the Algerian conflict. It is an essential human document, a real war book. Its unrelenting honesty, about the FLN no less than about the French, made party men of all sides uneasy. Algeria, which briefly caught the attention of a few American observers, notably Joseph Kraft and Senator John F. Kennedy, was quickly relegated to the file of impossible-to-understand foreign places. (Americans still know little about Algeria in its contemporary torments.) Feraoun was hurt by the world's indifference: "... I think that these honest people who are so scandalized [about Hungary in 1956] and that those sensitive souls that are so torn could have done the same thing for Algeria [that is, protested the repression]. They did not.... It is true that we are only Muslims. That may be our unforgivable crime. I would like to discuss with Sartre or Camus or Mauriac. Why?"

Yet the Algerian war, because of its utter confusion of the modern ideological war and the old-fashioned war of invasion and resistance, because it was a war in which soldiers raped and murdered with complete impunity while political leaders plotted one another's assassinations over points of doctrine as well as for reasons of raw power—this war remains an unavoidable reference point in the debate over the kind of world we will live in. And this debate was foreshadowed in Feraoun's journal, as in the polemical writings of Camus and Amrouche. For this reason, the publication of this English translation of Feraoun's *Journal* is very welcome.

III.

THE FRENCH CAME to North Africa in 1830. It was a sordid matter. Money had been lent to the French government by the ruling class of the Ottoman tributary ports during the debt-fueled glory days of the First Empire. Unpleasantnesses and provocations culminated in the slapping of a French consul, and in war. The timing was right: the regime in Paris, whatever it was—monarchy, republic, or empire, the French themselves were losing the thread—needed a foreign diversion. As Tocqueville had occasion to note, with some horror, the diversion came swiftly and brutally. Within a few years the French, under uninhibited and impecunious generals named Bugeaud and Saint-Arnaud, had exterminated a third of the native population and forced the emir Abdel Khader, a religious-military genius from the western city of Tlemcen, renowned for its Jewish learning as well as its Muslim learning, into exile in Syria. In Damascus, ever the gentleman, he exerted his influence as the most famous Muslim of his time to protect Jews and Christians.

The story in Algeria might have remained one of military garrisons and occasional wars against unvanquished Berber tribes, with desultory commercial activities along the southern littoral of the Mediterranean, as during the Ottoman period. This was the nature of the French presence in Morocco and Tunisia, and around the West African horn. But with the French defeat in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, and the loss of the eastern provinces of Alsace and Lorraine, there was a sudden need for space and purpose. The imperial idea was carried by the republican left rather than the anti-republican right, which was distrustful of foreign adventures. What had been a matter of brutish and ill-paid soldiers became a vast program of government-subsidized settlement.

The Third Republic used the pretext of a revolt in Kabylia to dispossess the natives of the best agricultural land. Bugeaud, who saw the value to the army's budget requests of a settler population requiring defenders, was quite candid: "The best lands must be distributed to the settlers with no concern for their rightful owners." (His colleague in Morocco, the legendary Hubert Liauthey, a reactionary soldier who hated the Republic and had in a sense gone native out of spite, though he returned to France for World War I, did his utmost to keep settlers out of his domain.) In the last years of the nineteenth century, France sent tens of thousands of settlers to Algeria, and more came from around the Mediterranean. The typical *pied-noir* family name at the height of the *Algérie française* period was indeed Durand, as Feraoun noted, but it was also Hernandez and Levy. By 1960, the Europeans in Algeria numbered about one million, compared with a native population of ten million. The destruction of the Kabyle agricultural base was poorly understood even by such liberals (as they referred to themselves) as Camus and the anthropologist Germaine Tillon. They failed to see that the French invasion itself, and not merely France's cruel colonial policy, was the disaster for the Kabyles.

Camus was well aware of the economic effects of this disaster, but he never really

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wanted to face up to its origins. In 1939, when as a young writer on the staff of the leftist *Alger-Républicain*, at the time Algeria's best newspaper, he left Algiers to report from the back country, he called his series of articles *"Misère en Kabylie."* He discovered mass starvation on a scale that even he, who had grown up extremely poor in the working-class section of Belcourt near the Algiers port, found shocking: "When it is understood that a Kabyle family never has fewer than five or six members, one gets an idea of the unspeakable want in which the Kabyles peasants live. I believe I can state that at least fifty percent of the population is subsisting on grass and roots, waiting for state handouts in the form of grain."

In the 1930s, 1940s, and even 1950s, Kabylie avoided famine of Ukrainian or Chinese proportions only as a consequence of the remittances that emigrants sent home. The figure of the emigrant, and his role in the grim local economy, was a staple of Kabyle folklore and literature. In one of the tales of *Jours de Kabylie*, Feraoun tells of the reaction of people in the market to a son of the village just come home: "Those who return from France are always welcome: to give themselves airs, they do not bargain and they have lost the ability to recognize quality. We take advantage of them, of course."

Warm and humorous when viewing village life, Feraoun was acutely aware of the high emotional price of emigration, for the emigrants and for the extended families left behind. The sacrifices made by these migrants, mostly men, as they faced loneliness and bigotry and every conceivable sort of exploitation in an inhospitable land, were transmitted in family memories, but largely unrecorded in literature. As the Kabyle poet and essayist Amrouche noted in the introduction to his anthology of Berber poetry, "the most painful idea is the fear of dying and being buried in foreign soil. . . . If you say of someone, 'He's an émigré,' you are saying his soul is deeply wounded. Away from home, these rough men were always in pain."

The migrants numbered a few thousand before World War II, and they became tens of thousands in the 1950s and hundreds of thousands in the 1960s, and thousands more even as the doors of immigration were officially shut in the mid-1970s. There are now about four million permanent residents from North Africa in France, if one counts both French citizens and resident aliens; and though French censuses do not include ethnic data, specialists in immigration report that more than half of the *Maghrébins* are of Kabyle background. The opportunities in Algeria were limited. In the generation that grew up with the century, the generation of Camus and Feraoun, the number of Algerian *évolués* numbered only in the thousands.

THE HUGE FRAUD perpetrated by the French colonial system consisted in its promise that in the fullness of time everything would work out for the better, as everyone would be brought into the embrace of the fraternal Republic, whose values were universal. No Englishman ever claimed that an Indian or a Nigerian would become English, though in fact many did. But the French made the explicit claim that Algerians and Senegalese would become French—and then they persisted in calling them *bicots* long after the term "wog" had become a throwback to a certain embarrassing time in English social history.

It was this hypocrisy that caused Feraoun to become disgusted with the French enterprise in Algeria. In a bitterly funny scene related in his journal, a young French officer seeks him out, as one of the village leaders, to tell him how much he admires the Kabyles and their culture, and how well, after living among them, he knows them—better, indeed, than his own compatriots! And much of this, he adds, he owes to Monsieur Feraoun and his great novels. But it takes no great effort for Feraoun to discover that this same young Frenchman cannot name a single one of those great novels, and treats his Muslim subordinate with undisguised contempt. And this is the lighter part of the colonial failure, a mere comedy of manners. Almost daily Feraoun also records the ease with which French soldiers shoot defenseless boys and old men and then report skirmishes with "armed terrorists," and have their way with local women, and steal from local shopkeepers.

When the war began, Feraoun, who taught school in a village in Kabylia, was frightened in the sensible way that a teacher ought to have been frightened: he sensed that the children whose lives he was dedicating his own life to improving would be drawn into a crucible of violence and counter-violence. As late as 1958, he notes: "I saw young B., who is getting ready to leave school to join the fight. He came to ask my advice and, above all, to proudly announce his departure. I told him I was against violence, even the fellagha's violence, and that I would be heartbroken to see one of my former students who was aware of my feelings on the subject being callous enough to kill. . . ."

Yet Feraoun did not draw the conclusion that Camus did, namely that the violence of both sides was morally equivalent, though it might be equally hateful. He came early to the view that the French colonial venture was the cause of Algeria's misfortunes, and that there was no alternative to its defeat. He would have agreed with Amrouche when the latter wrote, in reply to Germaine Tillon, who could not reconcile her love of Algeria with the thought of losing it: "The dramatic, desperate situation of Algeria in 1957 is due to one hundred twenty-seven years of colonialism. Colonialism instituted a theological 'order,' founded on the right of conquest implying the historical expression of the superiority of the conquering race over the colonized one."

Amrouche's case was interesting: he was a Christian, which was rare for a Kabyle and unheard of for a Berber from outside Kabylia or for an Arab. (For what ethnology is worth, Algeria is about three-quarters "Arab," of Middle Eastern origins, and a quarter "Berber," one of the indigenous North African populations.) Amrouche was one of the foremost French literary critics of his time, who among other things had a job in the French radio comparable (at a far higher level of culture) to that of the popular television critic Bernard Pivot today; and he was a poet in his own right, just below the level of Senghors and Césaire—in short, one of the major figures in the literary establishment in Paris. Feraoun, who understood this very well, wrote in his journal of Amrouche:

> There is nothing more Jesuit than the heartbreak that he stimulates, nothing more false than this inferiority complex that he dares to spread out length-wise in his columns. . . . He is gallicized to the tips of his fingernails, received everywhere without reticence, admired and listened to in the literary circles of Paris. Editor-in-chief at the national broadcasting system, he is now rediscovering his roots quite unexpectedly—namely that he is a *bicot* . . . who can be neither assimilated nor integrated.

It was a measure of Feraoun's integrity that, while he agreed with Amrouche's political analysis of the Algerian crisis, he resented the fact that Amrouche, from the safety of Paris, was making himself a spokesman for the FLN. Feraoun could not justify or accept the ruthlessness of the FLN, even if he recognized its historical role as the instrument of national liberation.

IV.

IN HIS JOURNAL in late 1955, on the anniversary of the beginning of the rebellion, Feraoun noted: "They are saying that on the night of the 31st [of October], Fort-National was attacked

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twice. They discovered weapons and a body in the field. His soul is with God." Seen from the village, matters had deteriorated since the first wave of coordinated attacks on French power in November 1954. Soldiers were seizing people and shooting them randomly. Kabylia was considered by the army, correctly, to be one of the FLN's principal centers. A few weeks into his journal, Feraoun drew in broad strokes the conditions under which he and his neighbors were living: "Military vehicles plowed through the streets, swooped down into the valleys, crawled up to the villages, stopped in fields, rounded up 'suspects' and, at times, came under fire." And he continued, in a passage that anticipated his differences with Camus: "they displayed more daring by setting fires to bulldozers, laying ambushes, getting even with informers, and disclosing their own identities to a population that was willing and able to give them sympathy and support. We were beginning to take them seriously, and that gave us new strength." Feraoun saw freedom fighters, Camus saw terrorists.

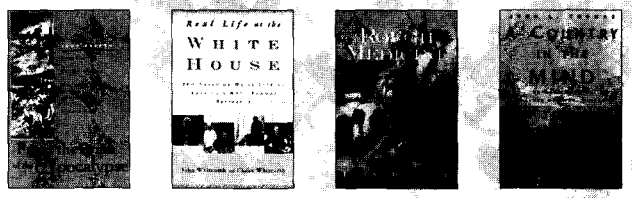
The calm, understated detail of Feraoun's descriptions was his strength as a writer. He recorded violence from one side—"A [local government administrator] went home one night, got out of his taxi, and was put on trial [by the rebels] and executed just like that only a mile from Fort-National. He was a family man about forty years old"—and then from the other side—"a [local Muslim official] was nabbed by the police one evening at his house. That night soldiers shot him six miles from his house. The following day's communiqué: an armed rebel was killed. It is normal to be armed when you are a rebel. What is not normal is to offer this explanation. In reality, there was no rebel and no weapon."

Feraoun saw that the pattern of violence and reprisal would escalate, pushing forward the hardest men on both sides. In de Gaulle he saw a man hard enough to stand up to the French Algerian "ultras." Camus, on the contrary, had tried to avoid admitting that the situation was irreversible, and persisted in calling for reconciliation, and took heart in de Gaulle's combination of a hard military line and political reform. The European and Arab communities, Camus wrote in a typical article in 1956, "can choose between association and mutual destruction. The choice in Algeria is not between quitting and [military] reconquest, but between a marriage of convenience and a suicide pact between two xenophobias." Ideologists of the rebellion, such as Amrouche, argued that this was possible only after the principle of the Algerians' right to independence was acknowledged. (He believed, rightly as it turned out, that this was de Gaulle's position.) But Feraoun believed that both men were mistaken. Already in 1955 he observed in his journal: "The truth is that there never has been a marriage... No, the French have remained aloof.... They have always believed they were Algeria.... [But] we are Algeria. You are foreigners on our land."

This was what Camus could never accept. Feraoun respected this; but Sartre and his friends accused Camus, whose anti-communism they despised, of being a colonialist. Of course, Camus's writings were not a defense of colonialism; they were an attempt to make the situation of the working-class Europeans in Algeria understood. Knowing that he had practically no support except among a handful of liberals, Camus began to write less and less, feeling that his efforts were futile, that he would not be understood. Raymond Aron wrote a book making the case for withdrawal on purely prudential grounds. In 1958 a young editor of *Alger-Républicain* smuggled out of prison a book relating a gruesome ordeal at the hands of military interrogators. "Lads of this caliber will build a new world," Feraoun noted with admiration. Despite the censorship to which it was subjected, the book helped to spark a protest movement in France that signaled the beginning of the FLN's strategic victory, even as the French army was tactically superior.

By then Camus had decided to throw

Rewriting the Past



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in the towel, collecting his writings in a volume called *Chroniques algériennes* and deciding that it would be his last shot, after which he would quit journalism once and for all, to concentrate on *Le Premier Homme* and his plays. Then, in late 1957, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature. Feraoun makes no mention of it in his journal. Around the time of the award, he records the story of a little girl who had hurt herself grievously. "The girl fell on her head from the dome of our [village] fountain, lost consciousness, went into a coma. Her father had just been arrested, brought to Beni-Douala, and tortured to death.... The mother, in a state of terror, gave birth to a second daughter and then lost consciousness as well. The entire family is near death."

Camus wanted to avoid talking about Algeria in public, but while answering questions on a college campus in Sweden he allowed himself a sentimental non sequitur that became famous, and sealed his reputation as a "colonialist." Between his mother and justice, he said, he would choose his mother. What Camus meant was that he disapproved of any "justice" that was established by the murder of innocents. Still, he was also affirming that justice should be delayed so long as the security of a million Europeans in Algeria was not assured: and this was not significantly different from what the ultras were saying.

Unlike Sartre and Fanon, Feraoun had no sympathy for the "liberating" act of violence against an illiterate deaf woman like Camus's mother. He did not fear to relate, in his journal, stories such as the one of the rebel woman, a tremendous asset to the FLN, who was captured and horribly tortured by the French army and then released by a guilt-stricken soldier. Out of distrust—or perhaps for a more sordid reason—the rebel group that she rejoined shot her on the spot. "She left behind a slightly retarded daughter who is now alone in the world." *This* was what Feraoun knew; *this* was the knowledge that he considered significant.

In 1958, the Gaullists tried to draft Feraoun into their own final attempt at fixing things. The idea was to install well-known Muslims in prominent positions to convince everyone that the regime in Algeria was changing in the direction of civil rights for all. He was offered a high government job. He refused it, and it may have been this refusal that convinced Malraux and a few others that the game really was over. In 1960, Camus was killed in a car crash. Feraoun mentions the sad event, though he probably felt, too, that it really was not what his journal was about.

As de Gaulle, in 1960, began his campaign in public opinion for the principle of self-determination, Feraoun sensed the war was drawing to a close, and that its last convulsions might be the worse. Extremists on the French side began to single out prominent Algerians for assassination; and Feraoun, who had moved to Algiers to work in a special educational task force that the ultras accused of being a network of communists and *fellaghas*, began to receive death threats in the mail. He tried to sum things up in his journal (which he knew would be published):

> ... when they began systematically to walk all over us, degrade us and massacre us, we went through a long period of anger, panic, and unspeakable despair. Then we settled into our misery and ... understood that we were being plunged back into the early years of the conquest, a period about which old people still talk and that, in our naïveté, we had thought was over. So we understood that we had to live again as victims. But there was hope ... from behind the barbed wire fences surrounding the villages, the guerillas were setting inept ambushes, dying with insults on their lips ... and wore down the enemy. It is necessary that our children learn the extent to which their elders suffered.... We should be able to put together all sort of stories.... It would be best if, later on, people knew about all this and told each other, "After all, our fathers were quite commendable and we can be proud of them."

But the shocks continued. They included the lynching of one of his cousins in Algiers by a European mob ("he leaves ten children"), and they escalated with a terrorist campaign by ultras reinforced by army deserters, known as the Organization of the Secret Army (OAS), who were determined to kill de Gaulle and his strategy or to turn Algeria into a wasteland. In 1960 and 1961, the struggle reached an ugly paroxysm of rage. Feraoun kept track of the atrocities, wearily but honestly recording the murders of ordinary people by the gangs of OAS desperados. "De Gaulle is going to give a speech to announce that the end of the Algerian war is very close," he writes in February 1962, just after noting the lynching of a suspected French collaborator and just prior to observing of the OAS that "they are afraid that they will no longer be able to kill with impunity."

Emmanuel Robles, who edited Feraoun's journal for the publishing house Seuil, described what happened next: "During the morning of March 15, in El Biar, on the hills above Algiers, Mouloud Feraoun was taking part in a work session in his function as inspector of Centres Sociaux. ... Soon after 11 AM armed men rushed inside the room and ordered those present to go stand along the walls with their arms up.... Then the massacre started. Feraoun was the last one to fall, his chest crushed by a burst of machine gun fire. His body fell over that of his friend, Ould Aoudia." It was exactly as Feraoun would have written it, unpretentiously and without rancor.

Amrouche wrote an angry piece in *Le Monde*. François Mauriac, Germaine Tillon, and Albert Memmi also wrote articles. The murder of Mouloud Feraoun created a scandal in France. Independence came in July; and the OAS continued its violent activities in France for about a year longer. It is sentimental to believe that in the village of Tizi-Hibel they knew that their teacher Mouloud had not died afraid; but surely it is true. ■

I Am Going to Start Living Like a Mystic

Today I am pulling on a green wool sweater
and walking across the park in a dusky snowfall.

The trees stand like 27 prophets in a field,
each a station in a pilgrimage—silent, pondering.

Blue flakes of light falling across their bodies
are the ciphers of a secret, an occultation.

I will examine their leaves as pages in a text
and consider the bookish pigeons, students of winter.

I will kneel on the track of a vanished squirrel
and stare into a blank pond for the figure of Sophia.

I shall begin scouring the sky for signs
as if my whole future were constellated upon it.

I will walk home alone with the deep alone,
a disciple of shadows, in praise of the mysteries.

Edward Hirsch

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The End of Deference

By JEFFREY ROSEN

The Warren Court and American Politics by Lucas A. Powe, Jr.

(Harvard University Press, 600 pp., $35)

IN THE PRESIDENTIAL campaign this year, the discussions of the Supreme Court have followed a familiar script. The Republican candidate has promised to appoint "strict constructionist" judges who will interpret the law rather than legislate from the bench. The Democratic candidate has promised to appoint justices "who understand that our Constitution is a living and breathing document" that includes rights, such as the right to privacy, "even though the precise words are not there." These are the same tinny slogans that candidates from both parties have repeated ever since President Nixon made an issue of the *Miranda* decision in the election of 1968. Instead of debating the merits of the Rehnquist Court, in other words, we are still debating the merits of the Warren Court.

In an important book, Lucas A. Powe, Jr. argues that the familiar debate about the merits of the Warren Court is, in fact, wrong. Far from being a group of liberal judicial activists who imposed their personal views on an unwilling nation, Powe argues, the Warren Court was, for much of its tenure, remarkably deferential to the political branches. The most significant Warren Court decisions of the early and mid 1960s—reapportionment, voting rights and civil rights, the early criminal procedure decisions, and even obscenity and school prayer—were not especially counter-majoritarian, Powe argues. Instead they were examples of the Court's efforts to bring recalcitrant local outliers, most notably in the South, into harmony with national values. The Court did this by casting itself as a partner rather than an adversary of Congress and the President, intervening only in cases where national majorities were thwarted from expressing their will. In Powe's account, it was only toward the end of the Warren era, in cases such as *Miranda*, that the Court provoked national opposition, by taking on national rather than local majorities.

Powe's book is animated by a great ambition. It seeks "to revive the genre of Supreme Court scholarship that focuses on the relation between the Court's decisions and national politics." By challenging our understanding of the Warren Court, moreover, Powe allows us to revise our understanding of the Rehnquist Court. For the current justices have proved to be the children of Warrenism in the most unfortunate sense: they have absorbed the imperious Warrenist rhetoric of the 1960s without Warren's instinctive deference to Congress and the president.

But how did the Warren Court come to be defined as a group of judicial legislators who repeatedly thwarted the political branches? In the late 1950s, Powe contends, this misrepresentation came from two unreliable and unlikely allies: acolytes of Felix Frankfurter and racist Southern congressmen, both of whom were united by qualms about the legitimacy of *Brown* v. *Board of Education*. Frankfurter's academic and judicial defenders—mostly notably Learned Hand, in his Holmes Lectures at Harvard, published as *The Bill of Rights*, in 1958, and Alexander Bickel, in *The Least Dangerous Branch*, in 1962—viewed the *Brown* Court as having defied the wishes of a national majority in a premature attempt to impose racial justice by judicial fiat. By the early 1960s, these qualms already appeared to be overstated. As Lyndon Johnson's landslide victory in 1964 demonstrated, it was primarily local Southern majorities that clung to segregation; and by paving the way for Congressional action, the Court helped to drag the recalcitrant South into an emerging national consensus about the evils of apartheid.

The academic attacks on the Warren Court provided a patina of respectability for Southern congressmen, who were determined to challenge the legitimacy of *Brown* by whatever means necessary. At the beginning of 1956, two-thirds of the Southern representatives in the House signed the Southern Manifesto, which denounced *Brown* as "a clear abuse of judicial power" and "pledged to use all lawful means to bring about a reversal of this decision contrary to the Constitution." The following year, four decisions handed down on June 17, "Red Monday," questioned the power of Congress and the states to investigate suspected communists; and this gave the South a pretext for cloaking its opposition to *Brown* as part of a broader attack on liberal judicial activism. "How much longer will this Congress continue to permit the Supreme Court to usurp the power of Congress, write the laws of the land, destroy States' rights and protect the Communist Party?" asked Congressman George Andrews of Alabama in a crisp encapsulation of the Southern position. And as Congress debated bills to strip the Supreme Court of its jurisdiction over security matters, William Rehnquist, a former Supreme Court clerk and a young lawyer in Phoenix, sounded a similar note in *U.S. News and World Report*, where he criticized his fellow Supreme Court clerks for showing "extreme solicitude for claims of Communists and other criminal defendants, expansion of federal power at the expense of state power."

The jurisdiction-stripping bill sponsored by Southern Democrats and conservative Republicans narrowly failed in the Senate, owing to the opposition of Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson, whose presidential ambitions required him to distance himself from his fellow Southerners. Powe also suggests that the attempt to portray the Court as a group of fellow-traveling communists failed because it was unconvincing: the Warren Court had been notoriously slow to challenge McCarthyism in 1955 and 1956, when it upheld much of the loyalty oath program. After the civil libertarian decisions of 1957 provoked congressional criticism and a convenient switch by Frankfurter, the Court hastily retreated. By 1960, the Court had once again upheld the constitutionality of most of the domestic security program. Far from usurping the power of Congress, as the Southerners claimed, the Warren Court proved to be sensitive to prevailing sentiments in Congress. It intervened only in cases—such as *Brown* and the reapportionment decisions—when Congress was unable to act because of a seniority system that allowed Southern committee chairmen to thwart majority will.

POWE'S EXPLANATION FOR the fact that the Warren Court instinctively cast itself as a partner rather than an adversary of Congress is that the justices in the majority had played a similar role ever since the New Deal. Between 1937 and 1952, when the Court sustained everything that the president did, these justices saw themselves as part of the national Democratic coalition; and because the president and Congress were

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working in harmony, the Court was never forced to choose between the two branches of government. This political reality, combined with the healthy suspicion of courts that legal elites embraced after the crisis of 1937, ensured judicial deference to the political branches. The steel seizure case in 1952, in which influential members of Congress opposed President Truman's efforts to seize the Youngstown steel mills, split the Democratic party and the Court. But with the election of John F. Kennedy, the president and Congress again were working in unison, and the Warren Court enthusiastically viewed itself as partner of the new governing coalition. "The best description of the period is that all three branches of government believed they were working harmoniously to tackle the nation's problems," Powe writes. "It was simply a matter of determining which institution was best suited to handle a specific problem, and each went forward in its own way knowing the others also were seeking complementary results."

Powe's goal is more to describe the Warren Court's behavior than to justify it; and he never offers a theoretical account of why it is appropriate for the Supreme Court to cast itself in explicitly political terms, deferring to Congress as a matter of course, and presuming to harmonize local outliers with national values. Such justifications exist, but they are open to various objections. The New Deal Court, for example, did not view its deference to Congress and the President as a form of unthinking judicial abstinence. Deference in the 1940s and 1950s was part of a broader theory about the legitimacy of judicial review in a democracy. Owing to the dangers of unelected judges substituting their own policy preferences for those of democratically elected legislatures, the theory went, judges should generally defer to the political branches and hesitate to strike down federal and state laws. But deference might not be appropriate in cases affecting clearly defined constitutional rights, such as the First Amendment, or politically vulnerable groups that could not protect their own interests in the political process.

Powe suggests that the Warren Court never had a very coherent theory; but if it had, the theory surely would have looked something like the one I have just outlined. *Brown* could be justified on the grounds that racist Southern congressmen were blocking a national response to segregation at a time when segregation was becoming an international embarrassment. The decisions striking down Victorian regulations on pornography and contraception could be justified on the grounds that local majorities actually supported sexual liberalization, but Catholic leaders were preventing these majorities from expressing their will. And in the rare cases in which the Warren Court struck down federal laws—in cases involving restrictions on communists—these laws conflicted with clear First and Fifth Amendment values.

YET POWE'S ACCOUNT raises as many objections as it answers. It is hardly clear, for a start, that when *Brown* v. *Board of Education* was decided in 1954, it was an example of the Court's bringing the South into line with a national consensus about segregation: as Gerald Rosenberg and others have demonstrated, national views about segregation did not shift measurably until the North was mobilized by the civil rights movement, nearly a decade later. Moreover, an account of the New Deal and the Warren Court that focuses exclusively on the court's efforts to unclog the channels of democracy cannot justify a case such as *Brown*, in which the Court thwarted democracy in the name of substantive constitutional values, such as equality. Still, if Powe does not provide a fully convincing justification of judicial behavior that often seemed more driven by political results than by judicial philosophy, he performs a great service by reminding us that the Court, in many cases, was less counter-majoritarian than it is commonly assumed to be.

Powe persuasively argues that the most important decision of what he calls "history's Warren Court," which lasted from the 1962 term to Warren's retirement in 1969, can be justified as an effort to unclog, rather than to thwart, the expression of majority will. Consider *Baker* v. *Carr*, the reapportionment case that Warren considered "the most important case of my tenure." Everyone recognized the injustice of rotten boroughs, and rather than second-guessing Congress and the state legislatures the Court was making them more democratic. The decisions upholding the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act were equally deferential to Congress's power to define and to enforce constitutional rights. The early criminal procedure decisions, which affirmed for the poor the constitutional right to court-appointed counsel and to a court-provided transcript, resonated with basic American ideas of fairness; and other decisions actually expanded the power of the police to conduct pat downs on the street without a warrant and to search and seize mere evidence of a crime. The first school prayer decision, forbidding New York public schools from requiring the Regents Prayer, provoked resistance in the South, but it came to be accepted in the West and the Midwest, where school prayer was less entrenched. President Kennedy, who liked Warren personally and was committed to church-state separationism, endorsed it unequivocally. A subsequent decision forbidding readings of the Lord's Prayer was embraced by Catholic and mainstream Protestant leaders, who viewed denominational exercises as an affront. When the Court struck down an anti-evolution statute, the national press was united in its praise.

In 1964, Barry Goldwater tried to make an election issue of the civil rights, criminal procedure, and school prayer decisions, but he was dramatically rebuffed. Indeed, the Court viewed Johnson's landslide election as a vindication of its bold leadership in *Brown*. "Never before in American history," Powe writes, "has a Court been told it was so right." The following year, in *Griswold* v. *Connecticut*, when the Court struck down a nineteenth-century Connecticut law forbidding married couples from using contraceptives, the decision was hailed even by Catholics, three quarters of whom agreed in a contemporary poll that advice on contraceptives should be freely available. As Powe puts it, "the South was an outlier on segregation; the Northeast on contraception; and the Court was tolerating no outliers."

IF THE WARREN Court's decisions were so popular in the early 1960s, how did the Court, by the end of the decade, come to be perceived as an arrogant usurper of national will? The answer, according to Powe, may be found in its controversial criminal procedure decisions: *Mapp* v. *Ohio*, imposing the exclusionary rule on the states; *Massiah* v. *U.S.* and *Escobedo* v. *Illinois*, restricting the use of confessions without a lawyer present; and above all the infamous *Miranda* v. *Arizona*. The earliest criminal procedure cases had been primarily about race, and their impact had largely been confined to the South: they were efforts to bring racist Southern police forces in line with national standards, and as such they were either unnoticed or nationally popular. But when the Court, in *Mapp*, changed the law in half the states and held that illegally seized but reliable evidence had to be excluded, the decision had the effect of freeing guilty defendants across the country. (No wonder that Abe Fortas, the future justice, called *Mapp* "the most radical decision in recent times.") *Escobedo*, which invalidated the use of confessions obtained during police interrogation after a suspect asked for a lawyer, condemned a system employed by all fifty states: the historian John Blum has observed that "*Escobedo* raised the storm against the Court to gale force."

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At this point Powe's chronology is open to question. The most controversial criminal procedure cases of what Powe calls "history's Warren Court" did not occur at the end of the era but at the beginning and in the middle of it. *Mapp* was decided in 1961, *Miranda* in 1966. Far from beginning in a deferential spirit and ending in an imperial one, the Warren Court showed elements of deference and aggressiveness throughout the 1960s. But there is no doubt that *Miranda* sent its critics over the top because of its unapologetically legislative quality. The Court's overconfidence in prescribing remedies for violations of constitutional rights was characteristic of some of the later decisions of the Warren era, such as the busing and reapportionment cases, which summarily held that there was a single solution to the problems of desegregation and reapportionment, and that solution was uniquely intelligible to five justices on the Supreme Court. ("Even some liberal-minded persons, admirers of the modern Supreme Court, find themselves stunned," wrote Anthony Lewis of *The New York Times* after the decision in *Lucas* v. *Colorado*, which required equipopulational districts in both houses of Congress.)

Powe argues that at the beginning of the 1960s the Warren Court decided cases on the basis of values that most Americans (with the exception of recalcitrant outliers) shared, such as overcoming segregation, Victorianism, malapportionment, and the use of the third degree. Yet there was no national consensus about *Miranda*. As crime rates rose at the end of the 1960s (largely because of changing demographics), politicians found it convenient to blame the Supreme Court. Lyndon Johnson's lame duck nomination of Abe Fortas to be chief justice went up in smoke, as Strom Thurmond, the former segregationist whose court-stripping bills had failed a decade earlier, successfully demonized Fortas as the emblem of the Warren Court's coddling of criminals. By 1968, sixty three percent of a poll's respondents agreed that the Court was too easy on crime. And when Richard Nixon pledged in 1968 to appoint justices who would stand with the "peace" forces rather than the criminal forces, his attacks on the Court resonated far more successfully than Barry Goldwater's had only four years earlier.

Nixon's attempt to reverse the legacy of Warrenism failed. The Burger Court, as Vincent Blasi put it, turned out to be the counter-revolution that wasn't. Indeed, if there was a single decision that vindicated the criticisms of the Warren Court's fiercest critics—that the Court was legislating from the bench and thwarting the will of the political branches—it occurred

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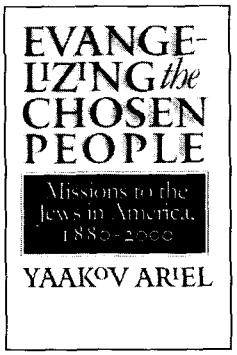

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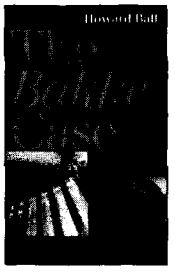

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on Burger's watch rather than on Warren's watch. In 1973, *Roe* v. *Wade* became the pink elephant of constitutional politics—the case that all presidential candidates, in every election of the past three decades, have found it impossible not to discuss. And *Roe* showed none of the deference and none of the sensitivity to national political sentiments that characterized the most important decisions of Warren's tenure. As Donald Grier Stephenson Jr. notes in *Campaigns and the Court*, abortion was hardly an election issue in 1972. Neither the Democratic nor the Republican platforms mentioned it, and the Democrats actually considered and rejected a pro-abortion minority plank. When the Court struck down the Texas and Georgia abortion laws in *Roe*, ten weeks after Nixon swamped McGovern, the Court's position was at odds with the laws of forty-six states and with both of the leading presidential candidates.

But it was *Roe* that made the Supreme Court into an electoral issue: it forced pro-choice and pro-life advocates to focus their energies on Supreme Court confirmation battles rather than on legislative battles, and it transformed the Democrats into the party of abortion rights, and it cemented the Republicans as the party of social conservativsm. Beginning with the election of 1980, in which Ronald Reagan called *Roe* "an abuse of power worse than Watergate," Republican presidential candidates pledged to appoint justices who would not only reverse *Roe* but would also repudiate the legacy of judicial activism that *Roe* and Burger-Warrenism embodied. When it came time for Bill Clinton to make two appointments, he chose justices who claimed to be similarly skeptical about sweeping exercises of judicial power.

NEARLY THIRTY YEARS after *Roe*, however, the Rehnquist Court seems in many ways even less deferential to the political branches than the Warren Court, whose activist legacy it pledged to repudiate. How could this have happened? A conservative legal movement arose in the 1980s based on the proposition that judges should exercise self-restraint by interpreting the Constitution in light of the original understanding of its framers and ratifiers. Although this movement defined itself in opposition to the Warren Court, it became clear, by the late 1990s, that it was really a response to the New Deal itself. Far from urging general deference to the political branches, the justices appointed by Reagan and Bush were comfortable with sweeping exercises of judicial authority to reign in the power of the federal government and to resurrect the power of the states. Between 1941 and 1995, the Supreme Court did not strike down a single federal law as exceeding Congress's power to regulate interstate commerce. Between 1995 and 2000, however, the Court struck down all or part of twenty-five federal laws, often on grounds of federalism or the separation of powers. In the process, the Court made clear that it was willing to question the meaning of the constitutional revolution of the New Deal. While liberals of the progressive and New Deal era had urged the courts generally to defer to Congress and the state legislatures on the grounds that politicians, rather than judges, were entitled to represent popular will, the most distinctive quality of the conservative justices of the Rehnquist Court seems to be a general disdain for the political branches—for Congress, for the president, for the administrative agencies, even for juries.

The Warren Court was largely composed of politicians and statesman—none of the nine men who decided *Brown* had any prior judicial experience before their appointment to the Court—while the Rehnquist Court is composed of former academics and lower court judges who have neither experience nor sympathy with practical politics. The result is a Wizard-of-Oz quality, most evident in the recent opinions reaffirming *Roe* and *Miranda*, the pillars of Burger-Warrenism. The decisions adopted the same imperious tone that characterized *Roe* and *Miranda* themselves, but they lacked the spirit of deference toward the political branches that, as Powe demonstrates, was found in the Warren Court's more convincing work.

When it reaffirmed *Roe* in 1992, for example, the Court refused to say whether or not it thought that the case was correctly decided in the first place. Nor did it bother to provide convincing arguments for why *Roe* should be retained, except for the fact that the Court had spoken and the Court must be obeyed. Moreover, the decision reaffirming *Roe* adopted the most grandiose strains of the Warren Court's vision of itself as a synchronizer and mirror of national will: the Court implausibly called the contending sides in the abortion debate "to end their national division by accepting a common mandate rooted in the Constitution." By the Constitution, however, the Court meant nothing more than its own contestable interpretations of the Constitution: in a really egregious passage, it reflected that "the character of a Nation of people who aspire to live according to the rule of law . . . is not readily separable from their understanding of the Court invested with the authority to decide their constitutional cases and speak before all others for their constitutional ideals."

This rhetoric of judicial supremacy first surfaced in *Cooper* v. *Aaron* in 1958, when the Warren Court ordered Governor Faubus to obey a district court's desegregation command. For fear of being defied, the Court lectured Faubus about his duties to obey the Supreme Court's interpretations of the Constitution, equating the Court's decisions with the text of the Constitution itself. The Court declared not only that its interpretations of the Constitution bound other branches of government, but also that it was "supreme in its exposition of the Constitution." As Powe puts it, "the Constitution, the Court asserted, meant exactly what the Court said it meant." In the Nixon tapes case in 1974, the Burger Court extended this doctrine of judicial supremacy from Congress to the executive branch, denying the president's authority to make his own decisions about the constitutional scope of executive privilege, and declaring that the confidentiality of the president's deliberations must yield to the judiciary's need for the tapes.

BUT THE WARREN and Burger Courts reserved their assertions of judicial supremacy for moments of national emergency, when the states or the executive branch threatened to defy the Court's decisions. The Rehnquist Court, by contrast, routinely adopts an imperious tone—the Constitution is what we say it is, period—even when striking down relatively insignificant, and symbolic laws, such as the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, whose constitutional infirmity was that Congress had presumed to interpret the First Amendment's guarantee of free exercise of religions more expansively than the Court had interpreted it. "The primary authority to interpret" the Constitution remains in the judiciary, wrote Justice Kennedy in *City of Boerne* v. *Flores* in 1997, stressing that Congress had the authority to remedy only those violations of constitutional rights that had been recognized and approved by the Supreme Court. Indeed, in his decision striking down part of the Violence Against Women Act, Rehnquist had the effrontery to cite *Cooper* v. *Aaron* itself. The invocation of Little Rock in an opinion invalidating a federal remedy for gender-motivated violence was rhetorically unfortunate, and it showed just how effortlessly this Court has come to view its own judgments as constitutionally infallible.

In its decision reaffirming *Miranda*, the Court took a similarly self-aggrandizing tone. Instead of approaching the opinion in a spirit of humility, Rehnquist essentially said that *Miranda* would remain on the books because the Court said so, and

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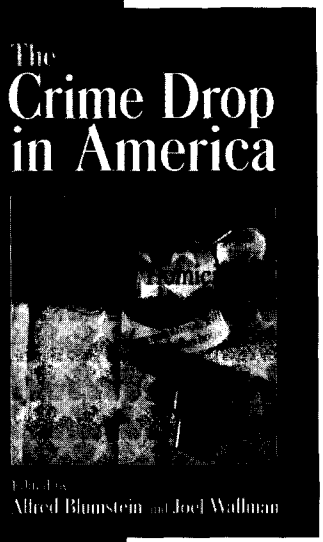
the Court alone was the sole arbiter of the Constitution. In a telling aside, Rehnquist added that *Miranda* had come to be "part of our national culture," as if the popularity of a decision was a constitutional argument for it. A less self-regarding Court might have shown respect for the competing constitutional views of the president and Congress. In his opinion, for example, Rehnquist refused to acknowledge the fact that, for thirty-two years, presidents and attorney generals from both parties had consistently refused to enforce the Congressional law that purported to overturn *Miranda* because of bipartisan questions about its constitutionality.

Cooper v. *Aaron* had at least represented an alliance of the Court and the president against a recalcitrant state majority; but the Rehnquist Court invokes the rhetoric of that decision to challenge the prerogatives of Congress itself. Although Rehnquist had expressed dissatisfaction with the Warren Court's broad view of Congressional power as long ago as 1957, federalism was a little noticed part of the Republican counter-revolution until 1995, when the Court struck down the Gun-Free School Zones Act as exceeding Congress's power to regulate interstate commerce. In more recent cases, the Court has resurrected the shadowy—and textually unmoored—doctrine of "sovereign immunity" to deny citizens of one state the right to sue another state for violations of federal anti-discrimination and copyright law.

It is not clear whether these cases are merely examples of judicial muscle-flexing or whether they are a prelude to a sustained judicial assault on the post-New Deal administrative state. But whether or not this assault materializes, the Rehnquist Court's cases resurrecting states' rights are arguably more aggressive than the Warren Court's cases scaling back states' rights. If Powe is to be believed, the Warren Court acted with sensitivity to congressional prerogatives and only intervened in cases where local outliers, primarily in the South, were resisting national values. By contrast, the Rehnquist Court's federalism opinions are suffused with a refusal to acknowledge Congress's legitimacy as a representative of national authority. And when the Rehnquist Court defers to national opinion, as it did in upholding *Miranda*, there turns out to be a significant difference between the "populism" of the Warren Court and the "populism" of the Rehnquist Court. The former believed that Congress was the best judge of popular will, while the latter sometimes seems to view itself the best judge of popular will. How, precisely, can this openly political vision of the judicial role can be reconciled with the justices'

The Crime Drop in America

Alfred Blumstein *and* ***Joel Wallman,*** *Editors*



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purported philosophy of judicial restraint? This they have never bothered to explain.

If EARL WARREN, the sunny Californian, showed an earnest reverence for Congress, William Rehnquist, the sardonic Arizonan, takes the opposite view. This may be partly a matter of temperament, but it also reflects a broader shift in political and academic wisdom about the legislative process itself. In the legal academy, where four of the current justices began their careers, public choice theory has called into question the claim that the president and Congress deserve deference as legitimate representatives of popular will. Instead, the political branches are now seen as captives to special interests, and the laws that they pass are regarded as cynical examples of horse-trading rather than attempts to serve the public interest. If the Warren Court viewed politics as a noble calling, the Rehnquist Court seems to view it as a forum for perjurers and clowns.

Why has the Rehnquist's Court's high-handed assault on congressional power not provoked Congress to launch a counterattack on the Court? Previous instances of aggressive judicial activism—in the Jacksonian, Progressive, New Deal, and Warren eras—provoked equally aggressive congressional responses; but there are no billboards calling for the impeachment of William Rehnquist. One possibility is that the laws that the Court has invalidated—the Violence Against Women Act, the Brady Bill, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act—are symbolic laws without a strong national constituency. Few people strongly object to them, but few people strongly support them, except the interest groups to whom they pander. The Court, in other words, may have made an accurate calculation that it can chip away around the margins at these symbolic laws without making anyone very upset.

In this sense, the Rehnquist Court might be seen to be taking a gamble very similar to the Warren Court's gamble. Perhaps national opinion has shifted in a more libertarian direction. Perhaps many people share the Court's view that federal laws that hand out symbolic victories to the various constituencies of identity politics—women, religious minorities, and so forth—offend a conception of liberal citizenship that can plausibly be read into the Constitution, even if its historical roots are thin. Sanford Levinson has noted that almost all the federal laws that the Court has struck down since 1995 were passed by a Democratic Congress before the Republicans took over the House in 1994. The Rehnquist Court seems to have the same disdain for laws passed by the old Democratic majority that, as Arthur Schlesinger Jr. argued, the conservative justices on the New Deal Court showed for the pre-Roosevelt Congress: there is a sense that the justices look on the old Congress as simply benighted, as captured by special interests or untrustworthy for other reasons. Reagan, Bush, and Clinton had run for president on the premise that the era of big government was over; and perhaps the current conservative justices, on some level, view the midterm elections of 1994 as popular vindication for this view. These same justices might view a victory by George W. Bush as an even more dramatic vindication, and, joined by new colleagues appointed by Bush, might then launch a determined effort to dismantle the legacy of the New Deal.

Of course, such an unapologetically political account of the role of the judiciary is open to the same objection that the Warren Court raised: why should judges follow the election returns? Robert McCloskey, an earlier scholar of the Court who combined insights from political science and law, insisted that judicial decisions were legitimate if they were at least plausible according to the conventional tools of interpretation, and if they were in tune with the prevailing legal consensus. But consensus is often in the eye of the beholder; and only the election of 2000 will determine whether the Rehnquist Court's effort to resurrect limits on federal power will be a brief departure from the unbroken period of judicial deference to Congress that has prevailed after 1937 or the beginning of the first serious attempt since that time to question the boundaries of the modern regulatory state.

The simplest explanation for the Rehnquist Court's ability to combine high-handedness with popular prestige is that the current justices are the children of Warrenism in one important respect: they carefully calibrate their decisions so that they reflect popular opinion rather than challenge it. The conservative positions without a national consistency—such "outliers" as resurrecting school prayer, allowing the regulation of first-term abortions, and challenging the administrative state at its core—have been shunted off to the dissents of Thomas and Scalia, and the politically moderate justices who control the Court seem ready to put their finger to the wind at the crucial moments when it comes time to reexamine decisions, such as *Miranda* and *Roe*, that have come to be, as Rehnquist said, "part of our national culture."

What has been lost in the wake of the Rehnquist Court's rhetoric of judicial supremacy is a competing constitutional tradition of judicial humility. In this tradition, the Supreme Court shows respect for the concurrent authority of the president, Congress, and the state legislatures to interpret the Constitution in ways that may differ from the nine justices. As John Yoo has argued, this tradition was originally associated with John Marshall, who rooted the Supreme Court's power of judicial review in *Marbury* v. *Madison* in its authority to decide cases rather than to resolve national controversies. Marshall's vision left Congress and the president ample room to engage in constitutional interpretation of their own, and to use their authority to challenge the decisions of the Court. Thus Thomas Jefferson, who insisted that each branch was supreme within its own sphere of authority, refused to enforce the Alien and Sedition Acts out of a belief that they were unconstitutional. And Abraham Lincoln similarly insisted that Supreme Court decisions such as *Dred Scott* should apply only to the parties in the case and not to other citizens who disagreed.

By abandoning this modest, case-deciding vision of the Supreme Court's authority, and by asserting the Court's exclusive authority to interpret the Constitution, Yoo argues, the Warren Court vastly increased the importance of Supreme Court appointments. But again there is a difference. The early Warren Court, as Powe reminds us, exercised its newly asserted exclusive authority to interpret the Constitution with sensitivity to the competing views of Congress and the President, and tried to overturn decisions by state legislatures only when all three branches of the national government agreed. The Rehnquist Court, by contrast, has arrogantly exalted its own interpretations of the Constitution above the competing views of the president and Congress.

Of course, all three branches of national government will not always agree: the harmony of the Warren era appears to have been the exception rather than the rule. But although the Court should never allow the president and Congress to violate clearly defined constitutional rights, it should give Congress substantial leeway to define and to enforce its own conception of constitutional rights, even when this vision is more expansive than that of the Court. This deference to the competing constitutional views of Congress was clearly anticipated by the framers of the Reconstruction Amendments to the Constitution, who saw Congress, and not the Court, as the primary enforcer of the constitutional guarantee of equal protection of the laws. But deference to Congress is a virtue that the imperious Rehnquist Court has refused to display.

It is unfortunate, in this election year, that neither of the presidential candidates has chosen to embrace a less grandiose

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vision of judicial authority, one founded on a decent regard for the competing constitutional views of the political branches. This might be a vision of judicial humility for an age of dissensus, anchored not in romantic respect for the wisdom of Congress and the president but in respect for their constitutional prerogative to interpret the Constitution in ways that may differ from the Supreme Court. A deferential Court would generally uphold the acts of the political branches, even when it disagreed with them, unless the president and Congress had violated constitutional rights and limitations that were too clear to ignore. It is not surprising, perhaps, that the Court has managed to avoid a political backlash against its high-handedness by keeping its finger to the political winds. But have the political branches become so cowed by the Court's grandiose assertions of its own supremacy that they have lost the will to stand up for themselves? ■

Kremlinologist as Hero

By STEPHEN KOTKIN

Understanding the Cold War: A Historian's Personal Reflections by Adam B. Ulam

(Leopolis, 448 pp., $30 paper)

TRY TO IMAGINE the intellectual life of the post-war West without the Polish emigration. The Polish impact has been especially immense when it comes to views on Russia. Czeslaw Milosz lectured at Berkeley with uncanny empathy on Dostoevsky. Leszek Kolakowski, the renowned moral philosopher at Oxford and Chicago, entombed Soviet Marxism as well as Western Marxism in his monumental trilogy, and composed an immortal parody of revisionist scholarship on Stalinism (for the pages of *Survey*, edited by Leo Labedz). Andrzej Walicki of Notre Dame struck brilliant portraits of Russian populism and the Slavophile-Westernizer divide, and then delivered his own eulogy for the Marxist faith.

And beyond the history of ideas, Zbigniew Brzezinski, the grand strategist and perceptive analyst of the Soviet Bloc, served as National Security Adviser (under Carter), while Richard Pipes, the grand synthesizer of imperial Russian history, also found his way into the National Security Council (under Reagan). The University of Pennsylvania's Moshe Lewin became the acclaimed village elder among historians of Soviet Russia's peasant inheritance, monstrous bureaucracy, and the supposed dynamics of the system's evolution. The itinerant Isaac Deutscher, based eventually in England, achieved biographical mastery over Stalin, ultimately cast out Trotsky as prophet, and talked up Khrushchev, until he was banished. And there have been many others, notably Adam Ulam, who died in March in Cambridge, Massachusetts, leaving behind a half century of influential scholarship and punditry, and a posthumous memoir, *Understanding the Cold War*.

Adam Bruno Ulam was born in 1922 in Lwów in Poland, a medieval town that was known as Lemberg under the Habsburgs and would become Lvov under the Soviets. Since 1991, the "City of Lions" has been Lviv in independent Ukraine. Little remains there of the classical education or Old World culture that nurtured the future Cold War historian. In 1939, Adam, who had just graduated high school, and his twenty-nine-year-old brother Stanislaw, a young mathematician at Harvard's Society of Fellows, home for summer holiday, were scheduled to board ship for New York on September 3. Their perspicacious father, a well-to-do lawyer who was widowed the year before, advised his boys to set sail earlier. So they embarked for New York in mid-August. Hitler invaded Poland on September 1. Sixteen days later, Stalin, by prior secret agreement with Hitler, invaded Poland from the east. By then, Stan had returned to Harvard, and Adam enrolled at Brown, the only entering foreign student, and a Jew. The brothers never saw their father or elder sister again.

Brown, where young Ulam studied European and American history, was not City College with its politicized, immigrant alcoves. As the Nazis overran France, began bombing Britain, and then drove deep into the Soviet Union, the gaiety of fraternity life and the "America First" detachment of 1939-1941 was almost too much to bear for a Polish student from occupied Europe. Finally Pearl Harbor broke the isolationist spell. Ulam obtained immigration papers and reported to the United States draft board, only to be rejected for having "relatives living in enemy territory"! In 1943, upon graduating, the tall, strapping youth was summoned for a physical, but he was turned away again, this time for near-sightedness. Unlike other eager call-ups, he had forgotten to wear contacts.

Following his elder brother (and surrogate father) to the University of Wisconsin, Adam got a job as an army instructor for Russian, the unfamiliar language of our wartime ally. The other teachers included an ex-czarist general, a former baroness, and a Moscow-trained Polish violinist with whom Adam shared an apartment. The roommates befriended a retired professor of Byzantine history, Alexander Vasiliev, who had known Tchaikovsky in St. Petersburg, and in Madison helped them to order spaghetti and meatballs in Italian. In such company, Adam acquired a fondness for Russian culture rather than the more typical Russophobia of the émigré Pole born of centuries under the Russian boot. The army privates and non-coms whom Ulam had taught to speak Russian were assigned to the Pacific Theater.

Stanislaw Ulam had disappeared (to New Mexico, it turned out, to work on the bomb), and after the long anticipated victory Poland disappeared, too, behind the Iron Curtain. Adam, meanwhile, had enrolled in Harvard's Government Department for graduate study. Two of his teachers at Brown had studied at Harvard, and Ulam writes that they imparted "an historical approach to modern politics enlarged by philosophical analysis and political and economic considerations"—a description of what would become his own winning method, now quantifiably out of fashion. He wrote a dissertation on English socialism, and also studied with Merle Fainsod, the dean of Soviet analysts, whose twelve o'clock lectures in a basement classroom in the Fogg Museum were affectionately known as "Darkness at Noon."

At Ulam's first Harvard residence, Claverly Hall, the janitor sported a derby hat and pince-nez, and reminisced about former student residents, such as Franklin D. Roosevelt. Later Ulam swapped places with a young scholar named McGeorge Bundy and moved to Eliot House. The housemaster at his new abode, John

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Finley, a professor of Greek, brought the university's most renowned faculty to the mess hall and social gatherings, and knew by name his entire student "flock," not just the European counts and princes. Ulam boarded with the son of James Joyce, the grandson of Matisse, the younger son of the Aga Khan, and a descendant of Indonesian rajas who told him his family had been in politics for 800 years. "And what did they do before?" Ulam recalls having asked.

In these mandarin alcoves of the new, American-dominated postwar world, Ulam, in J. Press suits and striped bow ties, came to know officials of Chiang Kai-Shek's Nationalist regime, who had no clue that they were soon to be overthrown, as well as trainees for what would become Mao's regime. Ulam also met Pierre Trudeau, whom he recalls as an aristocratic French-Canadian with "Christian-anarchist" views, as well as the doctoral student in economics Andreas Papandreou. Whatever he did for Greece as prime minister after the downfall of the colonels' dictatorship, Papandreou is said to have been valuable company for obtaining special treatment in Greek-American restaurants, and for navigating Boston nightclubs. Ulam lets slip that in 1945, after the relaxation of gender segregation on campus, a romance blossomed in Widener Library with an unnamed Anglo-Irish representative of the fair sex, leading to dog shows, horse races, and the Boston symphony, but it all "ended tempestuously." In 1947, he received his doctorate and George Marshall gave the commencement address in which he announced his plan for rebuilding Western Europe.

Harvard hired Ulam for the next academic year, and it set up a Russian Research Center, which in the years to come became the academic epicenter of the Cold War. Following Fainsod's death in 1972, Ulam would direct the high-profile center for sixteen of the next twenty years. But he taught his first class, attended by the undergraduate Henry Kissinger, on the British Empire. "Every few months, a piece of my course would, so to speak, fall off," Ulam writes of postwar decolonization. "I decided ... to shift to an expanding ... subject, and to teach about the Soviet Union." Before he retired, in 1992, he would preside pedagogically over that empire's crack-up as well.

Ulam married a Radcliffe graduate, Mary Hamilton Burgwin, in 1963 (they later divorced), had two sons, and wrote nineteen books, one a novel. As he here recounts, he initially devoted himself to examining Marxism's powers of seduction, which he linked not to intelligentsia manipulations but to psychological proclivities arising out of social developments, especially in peasant societies undergoing industrialization. And whereas some celebrated analysts, such as John Maynard Keynes, had dismissed Marxism as "illogical and dull," Ulam highlighted the doctrine's intricacy and comprehensiveness, which, he argued, explained its attraction not just to peasants but also to intellectuals. Ulam also wrote about the Soviet-Yugoslav split in 1948, which just three

Adam Ulam

years after the Chinese revolution, he presented as a harbinger of the fracturing of communism. These two themes—Marxism's spreading influence and its resulting divisions—formed the core of Ulam's work.

Having already ruffled some academic feathers by aptly describing the power struggle after Stalin's death in 1953 as akin to gangland Chicago under Capone, in 1965 Ulam published *The Bolsheviks*, the most incisive study to date of Lenin and his followers. Ulam's Lenin came across as a cultured Russian gentleman and an heir to a long revolutionary tradition, but also as a fanatic who, when the moment fortuitously arrived, beat the underground party into seizing power at all costs. What Ulam called Lenin's "penchant for terror" he attributed to a "perverse hatred" that the dropout law student felt toward "his own class," the intelligentsia, and to the hanging of his elder brother by the czarist police. Such occasionally strained psychologizing went together with skillful recuperations of seemingly obscure ideological disputations, alleged to have long-term repercussions, and sober details of political repression.

The upshot, a powerful portrait of the Bolshevik leader and the Bolshevik movement written despite the inaccessibility of many documents, burst on the scene after the de-Stalinization in 1956, the launching of Sputnik in 1957, and the Cuban revolution in 1960, all of which had contributed to a sense that the Soviet Union had not simply recovered from World War II but recaptured its revolutionary élan, and might just be the wave of the future. Here Ulam notes that the opening of the secret archives has brought little that was truly unknown about Lenin, unless one counts the proof of his consummation with Inessa Armand. The dictator's "all-engrossing passion for revolution," he writes, had "seemed to preclude the possibility, perhaps the ability, to respond to the temptation of the flesh."

Stalin had succeeded Lenin, and in 1973 Ulam published his acclaimed biography, *Stalin: The Man and His Era*. At the time the book appeared, the extent of the terror and the Gulag was being minimized by some leading American scholars, while even intellectuals without leftist sympathies sometimes felt that accepting the full unvarnished truth about the Soviet Union smacked of bad taste, or even McCarthyism. Ulam piled up the sordid details of Stalin's reign, and against the post-Khrushchev interpretive trend, he argued that the tyrant represented not a perversion or a usurpation of Leninism but rather its "defining characteristic." To his critics, who noted the utter absence of society in his great-man histories, Ulam countered, as he recalls that, "the most practical and important approach to the study of the Soviet Union was through its politics, which in its turn had to be an inquiry into what was going on in the political leadership." Dubbed Sovietology or sometimes Kremlinology, this endeavor at its best entailed voracious reading of official sources, often between the lines, frequent resort to the accounts of defectors, and inventive guesswork.

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So much about the Stalin years seemed to defy logic, such as the accusations of mass spying and wrecking throughout the Soviet elite during the Great Terror. Ulam surmised that in the conspiratorial atmosphere of the 1930s, most people, mentally equipped with little more than the official ideology, probably believed the preposterous charges that resulted in millions of arrests. "Working on Stalin, as I suppose on Hitler," he confesses, "is not a pleasant job. One cannot help becoming depressed by recounting the stories of human depravity and mass suffering." Ulam admits, however, having "found occasional distraction in trying to solve the intriguing historical puzzles of the period," mysteries "that would challenge the ingenuity of Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot." The archives, still not fully revealed, overwhelmingly confirm Stalin's responsibility for the massacres as well as the system's inhumanity, with copious new details; but the secret documents offer few new insights into Ulam's larger questions of the bases of mass participation and the adherence to socialism despite knowledge or even direct experience of the pervasive bloodletting.

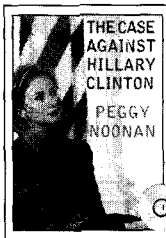
Ulam applied his feel for Communist personalities and paradoxes to the mysteries of international behavior of the Soviet Union as well. In such works as the instant classic *Expansion and Coexistence* (1968, 1974), as well as *The Rivals* (1971) and *Dangerous Relations* (1983), he wondered whether the Soviet leadership could achieve a lasting détente with the West, or required a permanent siege mentality for domestic purposes—a potentially shattering proposition in the nuclear age. Hawkish specialist-officials such as Brzezinski and Pipes largely dismissed any possibility of lessening hair-trigger tensions, arguing that the Soviet system could never change, while some left-leaning scholars such as Deutscher and Lewin foresaw a relaxation both feeding and growing out of a Soviet domestic liberalization. Inclined neither to bring on doomsday nor to pursue the chimera of socialism with a human face, Ulam hinted that the Soviet regime was beset by the contradictions of its expansionist successes, and might become more accommodating abroad even as it remained authoritarian at home. That is more or less what happened, until Gorbachev arrived to expose the incurable ailments and unwittingly hastened the system's suicide.

"Who in 1971," Ulam muses, "could have believed that if the USSR went down it would do so with barely a whimper?" Concerning the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, which precipitated warnings of Soviet global domination, he claims that "even in 1979-1980 I felt that the era of militant Communism was definitely over," given the threats posed by the anti-Communist resistance in his native Poland and a "capitalist-road" China. Still, he observes that he did not fathom the depth of Soviet problems, and he did not predict the collapse. No one did. As other scholars publish highly selective collections of declassified Soviet documents, which supposedly confirm their long-held views, Ulam, more right than most, had the courage to concede that "I was rather timid when assessing the chances for fundamental changes," and that on some major questions "I was quite mistaken."

PERHAPS NO SUBJECT exercised the lifelong student of European political systems and international affairs more than the American university, which Ulam had known since his years at Brown. Writing of the 1960s, Vietnam, and the student protests, he recalls encountering on his way to class "morning scenes of a sizeable crowd sometimes filling the large space in front of the library and an orator with a microphone denouncing violently some special iniquity of the university and/or of the bourgeois world." He pronounces the issues (or some of them) legitimate, but the methods not. The smugness that "Harvard was not Columbia" ended with the takeover and the forcible clearing of the administration building. Ulam admonishes that "the university in a democratic country is not the proper place for political struggle," while also judging the faculty's behavior at the time as "un-heroic."

Lecturing to Harvard students on socialism and revolution, Ulam had to be dragged to the suddenly recurring faculty meetings, which he likens to a "rowdy Balkan parliament" of "scholarly men, . . . largely without prior interest in politics, split up into combating factions." Of the phenomenal post-1960s growth in academic administrators, he concludes sardonically that "a great proliferation of bureaucracy follows every revolution, and Harvard was no exception." In 1972, Ulam published *The Fall of the American University*, in which he decried the "governmentalization and politicization" of the American academy, though he would continue to prosper at an American university for several more decades. He also became captivated by Russia's tumultuous 1860s and 1870s, writing *In the Name of the People* (1977) about the radical revolutionary mystique, the bomb throwing, and the assassination plots.

Cursed to live in interesting times, the exile from bygone Lwów came to know three American presidents, but mostly kept his distance from Washington. The academic conference circuit was not his cup of tea either. He never returned to his birthplace in what he playfully liked to call "Ukrainian-occupied Poland," and he avoided all travel to the Soviet Union, when it became possible after 1957, except for one short trip in fall 1985, preferring to receive important contacts along with students at the Russian Research Center (known since 1997 as the Davis Center). Ulam's tidied-up reminiscences are interspersed with warm recollections from his brother (who died in 1984), his ex-wife (the book's publisher), his sons, colleagues, former students, and old family friends. A zestful storyteller, Ulam favors the winning anecdote and the wink and nod over the tedium of score-settling. His tales of clubby academic practices and upheavals amid the Ivy alternate with ponderous exegeses of ever-receding Cold War controversies and brief mentions of out of place characters, such as Heinrich Brüning, the German chancellor who gave way, eventually, to Hitler and also found a home at Harvard. ■



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CORRESPONDENCE

continued from page 7

ated NICHD research to purely partisan ends? No one would argue with the tone or sentiment of their letter, but the Shaywitzes leave the substance of my piece untouched: that after 30 years and more than $100 million in federal funding, NICHD research has yet to reach beyond commonplace tautologies and tell us how to teach a very poor reader to read.

A longer piece on Eric Hanushek would indeed acknowledge that he has often been an intelligent and thoughtful participant in the debate involving resources and public education. One would then want to examine the "evidence Hanushek amasses," particularly his use of a very inexact meta-analytic method to come to his conclusion that "money doesn't matter" in educational outcomes. Peer-reviewed studies—one by a leading statistician, one by a leading economist—have found Hanushek's methods crude; when adjusted to be more statistically sophisticated, these researchers then determined, using Hanushek's own data, that money does, in fact, make a difference. As for class-size reduction, the STAR study, like any other randomized experiment, argues that, all other things being equal, reduced class size boosts academic performance, especially among minority kids. It may be prohibitively expensive to implement STAR as a national program, but STAR is a study and not a set of policy prescriptions. To prevent STAR from being implemented even in a focused and sensible way, though, one would have to attack it at its root, questioning its integrity as a study, which is exactly what Hanushek does, and which is emphatically not the mainstream view.

Bill Evers should go back and reread my article more carefully. Douglas Carnine was compared to religious fanatics by Michael Pressley, editor of the *Journal of Educational Psychology*. When investigating a particular NICHD study that had come under fire—one Carnine has vouched for—I was told over and over again, in breathless tones of exasperation, that it had "been published in the *JEP*," which is, admittedly, one of the most prestigious journals to publish NICHD work. You can't borrow its prestige with one hand and wave it off with the other.

Robb report

TO THE EDITORS:

In response to Michael Crowley's story "Unknown Soldier" (October 2): If Crowley had bothered to check the record, he would have found that Senator Chuck Robb has had an active and productive tenure in the Senate. *The Virginian-Pilot* recently wrote that Robb "has amassed a solid voting record as an opponent of deficit spending, a supporter of the men and women of the uniformed services, and a progressive on racial and social issues."

More specifically, Robb has worked across party lines on projects that matter to Virginians. For example, he secured $220 million for needed ship repairs, which help maintain both jobs and naval readiness. He helped expose systematic discrimination at the USDA, leading to the largest civil rights settlement in American history. He brought federal funds to the citizens of Bayview and southwest Virginia to help people get clean drinking water. He has worked for a regional transportation authority in northern Virginia to help ease gridlock. Additional examples of Robb's work can be found on our website: *www.senate.gov/~robb*.

Finally, I found it curious that Crowley contacted Robb's opponent for comment but did not afford us the same opportunity. But his sloppy approach and the tabloid flavor of the article reminded me why, three years ago, I canceled my subscription to TNR.

THOMAS J. LEHNER
Chief of Staff
Office of Senator Charles S. Robb
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITORS:

Michael Crowley mentions that Chuck Robb was a two-term Virginia governor. After serving as lieutenant governor (1978–1982), Robb served one term as governor (1982–1986). Though Virginia's governors can serve more than one term, they may not serve consecutive terms.

SCOTT RICHARDSON
Alexandria, Virginia

MICHAEL CROWLEY REPLIES:

I did contact Chuck Robb's campaign, as well as his supporters in the Senate and in the Virginia Democratic Party. And indeed I did bother to check the record, including Robb's website, which shows few memorable achievements and years of commentary on the senator's thin legislative record. In fact, the very editorial Thomas J. Lehner cites immediately adds: "But Robb, who was deemed Virginia's 'education governor' when he served almost two decades ago, still suffers from the charge that he has left few deep footprints during ten years in Washington." It is true, however, that Robb served just one term as Virginia's governor, in addition to a term as lieutenant governor. ■

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100+ Years of Zionism and 50+ Years of Israel What Can the World Learn from It?

In 1894, Theodor Herzl, a journalist and thoroughly assimilated Austrian Jew, was assigned by his Vienna paper to cover the notorious Dreyfus trial in France. The experience of seeing this Jewish officer being railroaded to a life sentence on Devil's Island led him to the recognition that life for Jews in Europe was untenable and that the solution of the "Jewish problem" lay in the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine.

What are the facts?

The Birth of a Dream. The return to Zion had for 2,000 years been the dream of Europe's dispersed Jews, the only hope in their miserable lives. "Next year in Jerusalem" had always been the watchword. But nothing was done to bring this dream to reality. Theodor Herzl organized the first Zionist Congress in Basel (Switzerland) in 1897 and political Zionism was born.

The concept of creating a new nation in what was then a sparsely-settled country was something totally new, never before attempted in the history of mankind. But Herzl's vision fired up world Jewry and especially the Jews of eastern Europe, who were despairing under the yoke of Russian oppression and recurring pogroms. Energized by Zionist aspirations, British Foreign Secretary Lord Balfour issued his famous Declaration in 1917, by which Palestine was established as a national home for the Jewish people. In 1922, the League of Nations entrusted Britain with the Mandate for Palestine. Regrettably, and contrary to the Balfour Declaration and the requirement of the Mandate, Britain decided that the provisions for setting up a Jewish national home would not apply east of the Jordan River. That area constituted three-fourths of the territory of the Mandate and eventually became the Hashemite Kingdom of Transjordan. Only one-quarter of Palestine remained to fulfill the Jewish dream.

> "One would think that the world, especially the emerging nations, would wish to learn from Israel's example, so as to emulate its achievement. Unfortunately, almost the exact opposite is the case."

A Nation is Born and Succeeds. The modern state of Israel was founded in May 1948, almost exactly fifty years ago—fifty years after Herzl formulated the concept. Immediately upon its creation, the country was invaded by the armies of five Arab countries. With a total Jewish population of only about 650,000, and with limited armaments and resources, the ragtag army of Israel defeated the combined might of the aggressors and established itself firmly within its boundaries. Transjordan (now renamed Jordan) stayed in possession of Judea/Samaria (now known as the "West Bank") and the eastern part of Jerusalem. Egypt occupied the Gaza Strip. The price was very high. In this bloodiest of wars imposed on Israel, over 6,000 citizen-soldiers died -- over 1% of the population. It is as if the United States were to suffer a loss of close to 3 million people! It was not the only war that its neighbors visited on Israel. In the Six-Day War of 1967, Israel once again prevailed; it repossessed Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank"), the eastern part of Jerusalem, and conquered the vast Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights. And once more, in 1973, the Arabs tried to destroy Israel in the Yom Kippur War. Once more, they suffered defeat.

Despite being under constant attack and siege and having suffered over 20,000 dead in those defensive wars, Israel created social and political systems and an economy that continues to amaze experts worldwide. Israel is the only truly democratic country in the entire Middle East, with governmental structure and institutions comparable to those of the United States. Its economy—despite the enormous defense expenditures mandated by the aggressiveness of its neighbors and despite the effort and expense of having absorbed more than 2.5 million immigrants (four times the population at the creation of the state)—can only be described as a miracle of human accomplishment. Virtually everything—infrastructure such as roads, railroads, ports, airports, water carriers, electricity stations and distribution networks—had to be built from a minimal base. Today, Israel's economy is booming. It is a leader in high-tech technology; it has created one of the most advanced agricultural systems in the world; it is one of world leaders in economic growth rate; it has one of the highest per-capita incomes in the world; and it is the world leader in exports per capita.

We have in this century seen the demise of many "isms", the most prominent failures being those of Communism and Nazism. But Zionism, the national movement of the Jewish people, has flourished despite incredible obstacles—to an extent that the visionary Theodor Herzl could not have possibly imagined 100 years ago. One would think that the world, especially the emerging nations, would wish to learn from Israel's example, so as to emulate its achievements. Unfortunately, almost the exact opposite is the case. Goaded by the Arab nations, inalterably hostile to Israel and single-mindedly dedicated to its destruction, the United Nations has offered more than 100 resolutions censuring and condemning Israel's actions.

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Stephen King and I

I AM A STEPHEN KING FAN. This weakness has caused me a good bit of embarrassment—especially during my former life as a graduate student, when I was expected to spend my days reading large, solemn books. I have been known, in fact, to conceal a King paperback inside a more weighty-looking tome. And when I buy King's latest offering, I usually do so at a secondhand bookstore, so that when I'm finished, I can guiltlessly throw it away or leave it on the subway—thus diminishing the likelihood that anyone will ever discover the offending volume on my bookshelves.

BUT NOW IT APPEARS I NO LONGER need be embarrassed by this predilection for pulp. A movement is under way to rehabilitate (or perhaps simply habilitate) Stephen King as a Serious Writer. It began several years ago, when King left Viking, his longtime publisher, and moved to Scribner. It was rumored at the time, according to *The New York Times*, that King "felt frustrated at being pigeonholed as a horror writer and wanted to be taken seriously as a 'real' novelist." *The New Yorker* took the bait shortly thereafter, publishing a lengthy profile that included earnest examinations of a number of King's books, including *Bag of Bones*, his first novel for Scribner, whose book jacket displayed approving blurbs from Gloria Naylor and Amy Tan. The latter said *Bag of Bones* "places both the ghost story and Stephen King in their proper place on the shelf of literary American fiction."

TO BE SURE, PRAISE FOR THE NOVEL—a heavy-handed commingling of subplots vaguely derivative of *Rebecca*, *Beloved*, and *The Dark Half*—was less than universal. ("What ... are we to make of a supernatural saga in which the ghosts are less terrifying than the [literary] agents?" wondered the *Times*' Daniel Mendelsohn.) Still, King's subsequent projects have been accorded somewhat more gravitas than his earlier efforts. Last year's *The Girl Who Loved Tom Gordon* was lauded as a touching psychological thriller happily devoid (well, nearly devoid) of ghouls or gore. With the novella *Riding the Bullet*, King became the first author of his stature to publish a work exclusively online. And this month King capped his recent run with a book of an entirely different sort—*On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft*. The book was the focus of a sympathetic profile of King in *The New York Times Magazine*, which cited Cynthia Ozick on King's belletristic qualities: "This man is a genuine, true-born writer.... He writes sentences, and he has a literary focus, and his writing is filled with literary history."

IT'S HARD TO DENY THAT KING writes sentences. And he does have an uncanny knack for seizing on the descriptive detail that makes you willing to suspend disbelief for even the most preposterous conceits. But that's a far cry from having a "literary focus"—as *On Writing* makes all too clear. Equal parts memoir, style handbook (including such gems as "The road to hell is paved with adverbs"), and advice manual for beginning writers, the new book offered King an ideal opportunity to argue the case for his inclusion in the literary canon. Instead, it provides persuasive, if circuitous, proof of exactly the opposite.

WHILE MANY WRITERS ARE COMPETENT and some are "really good," King argues in *On Writing*, only an idiosyncratic few are actually great—"the Shakespeares, the Faulkners, the Yeatses, Shaws, and Eudora Weltys." He continues, "While it is impossible to make a competent writer out of a bad writer, and while it is equally impossible to make a great writer out of a good one, it is possible ... to make a good writer out of a merely competent one." King finds this idea democratic, inveighing against literary critics and writing teachers who believe that "writing ability is fixed and immutable; once a hack, always a hack. Even if a writer rises in the estimation of an influential critic or two, he/she always carries his/her early reputation along, like a respectable married woman who was a wild child as a teenager." It's hard not to guess to whom King might be referring.

HAVING POSITED THAT IT'S POSSIBLE for merely competent writers to become good, King proceeds to his definition of "good fiction." Story, he says, should be the primary concern—writers needn't worry too much about language or characterization. "Book-buyers aren't attracted, by and large, by the literary merits of a novel," he writes. "Book-buyers want a good story to take with them on the airplane, something that will first fascinate them, then pull them in and keep them turning the pages." King then goes further: Story is not only what readers want; it's also the part of the book that is "the truth." "When I ... face another review that accuses me of being a vulgar lowbrow—which to some extent I am—I take comfort from the words of turn-of-the-century social realist Frank Norris," King writes. "Norris's books provoked a good deal of public outrage, to which Norris responded coolly and disdainfully: 'What do I care for their opinions? I never truckled. I told them the truth.'"

IT'S TRUE THAT WHAT MAKES KING'S books so frightening is that in their best moments they lay bare very real human fears—primarily that we, or those we love, will die. But being true is not the same as being great, or even good. Take *Pet Sematary*, King's 1983 novel about a man who inters the family cat—and then closer relatives—in an Indian burial ground that brings them back to life, sort of. The root of the book's scariness is the disturbing truth that if a person you love dies, you will do anything to get him or her back, in any form. And King is a good storyteller—he keeps the action fast and sharp, the dialogue short and uncomplicated, and the sentences (mostly) unfettered by adverbs. But he can't resist taking full advantage of all the easy, creepy details one associates with the living dead—bugs crawling out of eyeballs, the stench of decomposing flesh, and so on. In fact, King hides his emotional truths under so much simplistic prose and horrific detail that even those of us who believe they are there sometimes have a hard time finding them. Characters drink beer and sleep with their wives and love their children, but their inner lives generally don't get in the way. The fast pace keeps fans like me turning the pages, but the story doesn't contain anything essential that lives on in our minds after we've put the book down.

THERE ARE OTHER WAYS TO TELL A good story, even a good ghost story. The undead make more than a cameo appearance in Dante's *Inferno*, but they're not just showcases for gruesome description or devices for furthering the plot. There are (debatably) ghosts in *The Turn of the Screw*, too, but that book is no more about spooks than *Crime and Punishment* is about homicide. Those stories, it need hardly be said, are literature. Stephen King's, by contrast, will pass the time nicely on an airplane.

RUTH FRANKLIN

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The New York Times reports: Young Blacks Turn to School Vouchers

The New York Times recently described "a growing cadre of young blacks" across America who support school choice. To read the full article, go to "Latest News" at www.schoolchoiceinfo.org. Here are excerpts.

When Cory A. Booker talks about fixing America's school system, he invokes the words of Malcolm X: by any means necessary. To Mr. Booker, 31, an African- American Democrat [on] the Newark City Council...that [includes] giving parents vouchers financed by taxpayers to send their children to private schools...

..."It's one of the last remaining major barriers to equality of opportunity in America, the fact that we have inequality of education...Only if we return power to the parents can we find a way to fix the system," said Mr. Booker, [who is] part of a growing cadre of young blacks who have embraced vouchers, and school choice more broadly, as a central civil rights issue for their generation...

..."As long as black people are trapped in failing public schools, we will never achieve the kind of dignity and power that has been the central cause of the black freedom struggle for more than 200 years," said Omar Wasow, 29, executive director of blackplanet.com, a Web site for African-Americans...

Parental school choice is widespread unless you're poor.

...Howard Fuller, who served as Milwaukee's school superintendent after helping create [that] city's voucher program...says his goal is simply to level the playing field. White, middle-class families escape failing schools by moving to better neighborhoods or opting for private schools, he noted, while poor, minority families are stuck.

"People with money in America today have choices," said Dr. Fuller...

...[T]he voucher movement has a growing grass-roots component of low-income parents in large cities. A 1999 survey by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies found that 60 percent of African- Americans favored vouchers — compared with 53 percent of the overall population — and support swells to 72 percent among blacks earning less than $15,000 a year.

To help change the face of the movement, Dr. Fuller formed the Black Alliance for Educational Options (BAEO). BAEO Board members include a Colorado businessman who was ousted as president of his local NAACP chapter for writing a pro-voucher article; a minister who is co-chairman of the Michigan [school choice] initiative; Ohio's Secretary of State, J. Kenneth Blackwell; and Dwight Evans, a Democratic state legislator from Philadelphia.

There are also several young professionals involved..."We are fighting for the last chains to be taken from our minds," said Amber Blackwell, a 29-year- old mother of two who is on the Black Alliance board and plans to open a new charter school in Oakland, California.

baeo
Black Alliance for Educational Options

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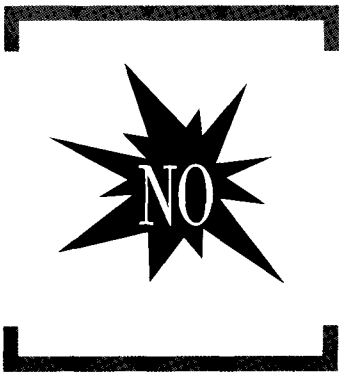
KIDS & TOBACCO



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To help prevent minors' access to tobacco products, we support and help fund the Coalition for Responsible Tobacco Retailing's nationwide "We Card" retailer education and training program. This effort has helped train over 500,000 retail store employees to reject attempted purchases by minors.

Working to help prevent youth smoking is important and it's the right thing to do for our company and for our employees. It's also the right thing to do on behalf of our shareholders and our adult customers. Everyone has a stake in solving the problem of underage smoking. At Philip Morris USA, we are working to help find answers.

For more information about our youth smoking prevention efforts, visit our Web site at www.philipmorrisusa.com. If you don't have Internet access, please call 1-877-PMUSAWEB.

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